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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Free Air

WE have been heartened by an excellent article in the January *Atlantic Monthly* which should make waves of doubt run down some radio spines. The author complains that, to paraphrase Wordsworth: we have given our air away, a sordid boon!, disposed of its waves to advertisers who have changed all the glittering boasts of a few years ago that we would educate, enlighten, and elevate the populace by science's latest toy, into a reality of washing machines sold by jazz bands and booming voices recounting the merits of soap at every pause in a melody.

Music has gained by the microphone, although in most hours of the day and night a radio dial will swing to four or five dance orchestras playing second class music so much the same that only loudness can determine the choice. When there is a football game, or a Red Cross Drive, or a political speech, the radio has its obvious advantages, there are a few, a very few, really humorous entertainers, and the scant hours reserved for the public interest do still contain unexpected excellences, but it is not too much to say that except for Sunday afternoon every circuit available is stuffed, most of the time, with mediocrity or plain tripe, with an ever increasing favor for the tripe.

But they like, the sacred "radio audience," like tripe! Unquestionably, precisely as they like tabloids, and sentimental movies, and canned food. If the air, which used to be called free, and the property of all, is to be sold under government regulation for profit making, the most saleable goods must be put on it. Schools, on the same basis, would distribute lollypops instead of lessons, and churches I. O. U.'s for salvation instead of penitence and worship (and some of them do). As soon as any enterprise dealing with the masses is put upon a profit making basis exclusively, it inevitably seeks the lowest common denominator. But should the air be sold for profit only? Is not the wave, at the least, a public utility and to be guarded and regulated as such?

* * *

This is no counsel of perfection. The radio, whatever else it is or may be, is a means of entertainment. Only a fanatic would ask that all the music on the air should be Bach or Ravel, all the drama witty, all the speeches sensible, or that the eternal repetition of the same melodies, same stunts, same silly dialogue, same molasses dripping unctuosities of announcers describing gypsies in the dawn should be prevented by legislation. There are no Victorias in the twentieth century who have the right to say "we are not amused." But if this is a democracy, then the minority has some rights. If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you wrong us, shall we not revenge? The revenge at the moment is puny. Thousands of families in this country who can well afford a radio, and an expensive one, are denying themselves, not for economy's sake but because they are sick to death of the hodge-podge, the fulsomeness, and the exploitation that even the best circuits will discharge upon them if the householder leaves his knob long enough to sit down in a chair to light his pipe.

In England the radio *is* a public utility. There is plenty of honest tripe for the tripe hungry available on the English air. But there is at least one circuit which people of reasonable taste and intelligence, more mature than the thirteen-year-old child, who, according to the *Atlantic* article, is the norm at

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*Life**

By H. D. THOREAU

MY life is like a stately warrior horse,
That walks with fluent pace along the way,
And I the upright horseman that bestrides
His flexuous back, feeling my private thoughts.
Alas, when will this rambling head and neck
Be welded to the firm and brawny breast?
But still my steady steed goes proudly forth,
Mincing his stately steps along the road;
The sun may set, the silver moon may rise,
But my unresting steed holds on his way.
He is far gone ere this, you fain would say,
He is far going. Plants grow and rivers run;
You ne'er may look upon the ocean waves,
At morn or eventide, but you will see
Far in th' horizon with expanded sail,
Some solitary bark stand out to sea,
Far bound—well, so my life sails far,
To double some far cape not yet explored.
A cloud ne'er standeth in the summer's sky,
The eagle sailing high, with outspread wings
Cleaving the silent air, resteth him not
A moment in his flight, the air is not his perch.
Nor doth my life fold its unwearied wings,
And hide its head within its downy breast,
But still it plows its shoreless seas of time,
Breasting the waves with an unsanded bow.

* HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S poem "Life" has been printed but once before, in the obscure book of manuscript facsimiles called *Autograph Leaves of Our Country's Authors*, printed in Baltimore in 1864 and sold that year at the Union Sanitary Fair—a charity in aid of Northern soldiers. The greater part of the poem, with one passage omitted and a slight textual variation, is to be found on two bits of Thoreau manuscript in the Pierpont Morgan Library. The poem in its entirety has never been reprinted except in a private leaflet for Professor Raymond Adams of the University of North Carolina who discovered it, nor have bibliographers noted its appearance in the Baltimore wartime book. The present text is that of the 1864 facsimile edition.

This Week

"Wolsey."
Reviewed by WALLACE NOTESTEIN.
"The Challenge of Russia."
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL.
"Grand Hotel."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.
"The Last Days of Shylock."
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"The Ring of the Lowenskölds."
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John Mistletoe, XXV.
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The Boar and the Shibboleth.
By EDWARD DORO.

Next Week, or Later

Masters's Life of Lincoln.
Reviewed by CLAUDE BOWERS.

The Subject Sex*

By AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS

THERE is one argument against the equality of the sexes which worried me for a long time, when I was young and earnest. "Women," said my accuser darkly, "must always have been less vigorous and intelligent than men, otherwise men would never have got away with their disgraceful treatment of them."

What has that treatment been? What, for instance, has Blackstone, that personification of British justice, to say about women? Mrs. Strachey, in her new history of the Women's movement in England, quotes him.

> By marriage the very being or legal existence of a woman is suspended, or at least incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband, under whose wing, protection, and cover she performs everything.

> If a married woman (says another learned judge) who can have no goods of her own to live on (even the money she earned subsequent to separation was then the property of her husband), if such a woman will depart from her husband against his will, let her live on charity, or starve in the name of God!

Martin Luther had no undue tenderness:

> If a woman becomes weary or at last dead from childbearing, it matters not. Let her only die from bearing. She is there to do it.

Right up to the 1850's it was generally agreed, Mrs. Strachey reminds her readers, that men were superior to women,—

> Mentally, physically, and morally. Education would be wasted upon them, responsibility would overwhelm them, and work would make them ill. They must be sheltered, protected, and indulged.

And, she goes on:

> Women who were brought up on this convention grew accustomed to it, and loved it, and sheltered under their irresponsibility. Men despised them, and women did not mind.

It certainly seems that we must look round for some cause for so extraordinary a state of things, for when Blackstone, or the judge, or the divine wrote, they were making world statements—the position of women was no better in any other country. Today in all Eastern countries (that is, among the majority of mankind), women are still oppressed, still rank as property. Nor is the situation confined to the human race. Students of zoölogy find plenty of Blackstones and Luthers among our fellow members of the primate group, and very few John Stuart Mills. There is a curious feature in the case. This history of enslavement has been reënacted in the life history of every individual woman who has been its victim, for in scarcely any society is a very marked difference observed, or even supposed, between very little boys and very small girls.

The little girl, then, it appears, though not more a slave than the boy has the seed of some aptitude for slavery inherent in her,—the seed matures as she grows. How are they different? Puzzled by conjecture, I have watched many boys and girls of my acquaintance, and cross-questioned any number of schoolmasters and mistresses who taught in schools where the sexes were mixed. Some said one thing, some said another, but three differences seemed to emerge. It seemed the general opinion that little girls differ from little boys in not wanting to fight, in being at most mildly and politely interested in

* STRUGGLE. By RAY STRACHEY. New York: Duffield & Company. 1930. $3.50.

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machinery, in being less hysterical and more tenacious, and (when it comes to science) in preferring some branch of biology to say, astronomy or chemistry. One further distinction has been suggested—that on the whole little girls are inclined to do things vicariously, that is to want something done, and then search out a little boy and make him do it. Facts about women are harder to collect. They have not long been left to their own devices. But some hints we may get.

Talking in Moscow not long ago to the wife of a Russian doctor, I was told that the profession of medicine seems on the way to becoming a female monopoly in Russia. There were plenty of men scientists, but her husband found that in his student classes women had begun to predominate in the most marked way, and that other professors of medicine had the same experience.

In Russia, of course, women have a great deal of choice. They are pampered, and of two properly qualified applicants for a job the woman seems always to get the first chance. Nor is Russia the only country in which this is true. "American women," said an American friend sombrely the other day, "are only equalled in selfishness by English men."

But all this brings us little nearer, for to say that in two countries the subjection of women has been over for a year or two, is not to explain its subsistence in three-quarters of the world for the whole of recorded history.

Alas! that this point should seem to her to lie outside the scope of Mrs. Strachey's book, which is strictly historical. I wish that she had devoted a word or two to it in passing, for she knows a great deal and has a clear mind. Does the secret lie in that unwillingness of little girls to fight which we noticed before? But then there has been no change here. Mrs. Pankhurst's amazing courage, which is here narrated, has often been matched, though certainly never exceeded. There have always been brave women. But there is, of course, another factor which has not remained constant, and, tantalizingly, Mrs. Strachey (having perhaps never asked herself the question) does not follow out this clue to a possible answer. Did women in the past, do they in the present, submit because their natural leaders have, in fact, always become, in Luther's formidable words, "weary, or at last dead from childbearing?"

* * *

To anybody interested in the vagaries of human conduct and human history, Mrs. Strachey's book will prove a fascinating one. The little biographies with which it is interspersed are terse and interesting, while the social flavor of several different epochs and the humor of the combat are quite excellently suggested. With photographs, description, and telling instance, she brings back to her reader the revolving worlds of John Stuart Mill, of Miss Buss and Miss Beale, and, later, of the wild, fascinating, and courageous, Pankhursts.

The suffragettes made the world gape in 1906:

> They opposed the Government at bye-elections, heckled Cabinet Ministers at meetings, and went on undiscouraged deputations to the men who refused to see them, only to be arrested for obstruction. They arrived in all sorts of disguises, and appeared in all sorts of places. Now one would appear as a messenger boy, now another as a waitress; one was found chained to a statue in the lobby of the House of Commons. They sprang out of organ lofts, they peered through roof windows, they leapt out of innocent looking furniture vans, they harangued the terrace of the House from a barge in the river.

After the war they got their desire in England, though just across the Channel in France women are still considered unfit to vote.

But though in England, Russia, Scandinavia, and America, the relative positions of men and women do not show the discrepancies of one hundred, or even fifty years ago, yet it would be bold to say that the points at issue between the two sexes have been entirely settled. In the tenth century it was stated as the chief duty of Chinese officials sent to the provinces that they must harmonize "Yin" and "Yang," the Feminine and Masculine principles in Nature. Something of this remains to be done in the West. The West is, by world standards, given up in an exaggerated degree to Yang—to Doing, as against Being, to the male as against the feminine principle. Only to women was it in the West for long permissible to cultivate the excellences of Being. Now women, too, are being pushed by economics and public opinion to the active side. There is a sense in which this may be said to be dangerous, and now we see that men are themselves beginning to redress the balance. No one can fail to notice in intellectual circles, both in England and America, the enormous increase in femininity in men. The question is, how far an exchange of jobs is desirable. Obviously in individual cases the answer is that it is sometimes extremely desirable, but whether on the whole men make as good women as women do, or women as good men, is debatable.

Are we some day going to be able to harmonize Yin and Yang, and if so, how?

A Great Figure

WOLSEY. By HILAIRE BELLOC. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1930. $5.

Reviewed by WALLACE NOTESTEIN

THIS book has been written apparently with a purpose. "The reunion of our civilization," says the author, is "vital to its mere survival." "Our disunion has reached a pitch in which we are capable of destroying ourselves in mutual combat to no purpose, nation against nation, each killing itself in that struggle, after that class against class." He fears either the "tyranny of Communism" or that we shall sink into savagery. "One whole province of the world has crashed in Russia." Yet our leaders continue to act as though all would endure.

> Were there today, what there is not, one figure capable by genius and good fortune of combining in itself the remaining strength of society, he would be Wolsey's modern parallel. He would fail, as Wolsey failed; for the change would be greater than he. Were he to fail, as probably he would through some petty accident unforeseen as Wolsey did, the parallel would be complete.

Our disunion, Belloc would say, is largely the result of the Reformation. To him it is the tragedy of Wolsey's career that he might have saved England for the Roman Church.

The book has been easier than most to write. Professor A. F. Pollard, who has spent most of his life upon the reign of Henry VIII, published about two years ago a brilliant and authoritative account of Wolsey, which not only straightened out and arranged the facts of his life but which measured Wolsey's failures and estimated the value of his achievement. "To the particulars of his life," says Belloc, "no one can pretend to add much since the recent work of Professor Pollard. The research and accuracy of that great scholar have almost exhausted the field of documents." He might have added that Pollard had left little to do by way of interpretation, for Belloc has accepted much of Pollard's interpretation, save where it needed modifying or reworking to suit his special historical point of view. The theory which Pollard put forth years ago, that Henry in his wish for a divorce was less moved by a desire for Anne Boleyn than by his honest belief that Katherine's many miscarriages proved divine displeasure at his marriage with the widow of his brother, does not of course belong in the Bellocian philosophy. Belloc prefers to believe that it was the bright eyes of Anne that brought on the divorce and all the fearful disunion of Europe that followed. But it is not the whole truth that Belloc has rewritten Pollard with a Catholic approach. He is less insistent than in some other books on imposing his creed upon the reader, nor so given to the assumption that Protestants were knaves. He admits the evils of the papacy and deals with the corruption among the monastic and secular clergy. Furthermore, he has written for the reader whom Pollard could not interest, for the man to whom history is not part of the stuff of his larger memory, to whom the processes of history are something of a mystery, the man who wishes reading that will not demand too much effort. Only the historian class-conscious of his guild will deny that there is a place for such books. In the making of them few men are so skilled as Belloc. He has taken pains to sketch in the background of his work, to picture in what is almost a series of posters the Europe and the England which Wolsey set out to master. In his own way Belloc knows a lot of history and knows much better than Pollard how to make the reader stop now and then and take a look at the whole landscape. What a master he is of the art of presentation! Those who wish to learn the art of biography for the public may well study this book. Belloc manages to bring Francis I, Charles V, the Venetian Republic, and the Papacy upon the scene, to make their several positions and aims clear and yet to stick to the theme of Wolsey. It is a story, and Belloc knows all about telling a story.

In the back of the book Belloc has packed a small kit of learning. One feels that he is at some pains to disagree with Pollard where possible. In those disagreements it is usually best to follow Pollard who spreads a wider net to catch his evidence and who examines that evidence with less preconceived theories. Preconceived theories are part of the charm of Belloc but not of his strength.

Belloc is anything but an economic historian. Economic determinism he would look upon as something ill, smelling of the soviets. "It is individuals," he says, "who make and change history." Movements other than religious seldom merit his attention. To be sure he is vaguely aware that conditions among the German peasants may have had something to do with the spread of Luther's ideas and now and then he seems to realize that the great man cannot always master the situation. Nevertheless it is not men but the man that counts with him. To any historian who is working day by day to explain for himself some decade in the past, who becomes accustomed to the complexity of events, and who becomes less afraid of erring in occasional details than of missing some major force among the many interrelated movements, Belloc's easy handling of the past seems delightful. He seems to be a bright child playing with a high grade of historical toys, but playing so earnestly and with such zest and sincerity that it would be rude to complain.

An Imperative Challenge

THE CHALLENGE OF RUSSIA. By SHERWOOD EDDY. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

MR. SHERWOOD EDDY'S point of view differs from that of most of the innumerable foreigners who have written books about Russia since the Revolution. Neither history nor reporting, still less writing, as such, is his main concern. As the former Secretary for Asia of the Y. M. C. A., and, more recently, since his retirement from active service with that organization, a sort of missionary-at-large, continuing, at his own expense and direction, travels, interviews, and studies similar to those in which he used to be more formally occupied, his standpoint might be described as that of the Christian internationalist, weighing his own country and people no less than the Russian experiment, mainly from the moral point of view, for what they seem to have contributed, or to be likely to contribute, toward his own ideal of universal brotherhood.

In this role, Mr. Eddy has inevitably come in for criticism from tough-minded regulars and thoroughgoing conformists of both sides. When a man speaks of lynching, race prejudice, "imperialism"—just whatever that may be—the waste of unplanned, competitive industrialism, the drawbacks, to put it no more vigorously, of old-fashioned *laissez-faire* and individualism, whether measured in terms of city slums or catastrophes such as the great war, just as bitterly as he does of the tyranny of the Communist dictatorship or the persecutions of the G. P. U., he is in for trouble. Super-patriots in this country have denounced Mr. Eddy as an enemy of the commonweal because he found some parts of the Bolshevik experiment actually working and discerned behind the Revolution's stupidity and intolerence a certain formidable reality and vitality. And the Muscovites with whom Mr. Eddy has actually held public debates on religion and who have made it too dangerous for him even to try to visit some of his old acquaintances whom he organized into student groups before the war, doubtless similarly regard him as a half-baked trouble-maker and peddler of bourgeois "opium."

Those who take the trouble to read his new book through will find a partial cause for similar roars in certain idiosyncrasies of editing and literary arrangement. Chapters IX, X, and XIII, for instance, comprise some pretty thoroughgoing criticism of the Soviet system. The other chapters are comparatively favorable, and the somewhat hortatory tone in which they are written—the saving salt of criticism all being heaped in one place instead of being distributed, at least by implication, along the way—will doubtless put the backs up of those who tackle these chapters first and do not go farther.

First and last, Mr. Eddy gets round to the usual subjects—agriculture and collectives, industry and

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labor, education and culture, morals and marriage, law and justice, and so on. He is most interesting, I think, in his chapter on religion, for it is in this field that he has butted squarely into the prejudices of the ruling minority; it is a subject which hits him, as we say, where he lives.

He makes a comparison and contrast, in parallel columns, of Communism and Christianity, pointing out, quite objectively, their dissimilarities, and their partial likenesses in ultimate aim, notwithstanding the materialistic basis of the one and the theistic basis of the other. He explains the background of much of the hatred of religion on the part of the present leaders; the comparative lack of preparation in the Eastern Orthodox Church, with its accent on esthetic mysticism, its slightly flabby human-ness, as contrasted with Rome's stern discipline and highly organized efficiency, to meet any such drive as the Bolsheviks have launched against it. He suggests that Christianity, even during its early persecutions, never had to meet anything as difficult as "this relentless, implacable, ruthless persecution of cold intelligence."

That there is persecution, in spite of official denial of it, and in spite of the numbers of churches which are permitted more or less sketchily to carry on, both against the foreign "sectarians" who were beginning to get a foothold in Russia, and against almost any representative of the Russian church who seems by way of exerting influence or attracting a following, scarcely needed to be brought out. The enthusiasts of the Godless Society work with an energy, apparent sincerity, and naive enthusiasm which recalls the zeal with which our own western missionaries started in to wrestle with the ancient religions of the East a century ago. One of their ingenious ways of closing a church is to visit all the families in its neighborhood, ask them whether they would prefer to have the church used as a church or turned into a useful neighborhood club, and when they have thus obtained enough signatures, petition the authorities in the name of the majority to have the building taken for secular purposes.

Mr. Eddy finds "not even a tithe of the religious liberty enjoyed under the old régime." Atheism seems to be making great strides, but he thinks its power will not have been genuinely tested until the people are left free to follow the impulses of their own hearts instead of being driven, as one prominent Soviet official frankly admitted to him, "to believe what they are told, and *we* propose to tell them." In one four-hour public debate which he and his party held with representatives of the Godless Society on Theism versus Atheism, so much vigor was revealed in the questions put by the audience in support of his own side of the argument, that Mr. Eddy concluded that once liberty of conscience was restored "religion would reassert itself and find expression, as it always has in history, along with every other elemental and fundamental capacity of the human spirit."

Here, as in his considerations of capitalism, as such, Mr. Eddy looks at results rather than at labels, and is as critical of the shortcomings of western civilization as of the faults of the Bolsheviks. Readers will differ in their estimate of the significance of his inferences and conclusions, but surface facts may be accepted, I think, as generally sound.

His title, "The Challenge of Russia," means just what it says. In spite, that is to say, of stupidities and crimes which he characterizes as "damnable," he feels that there is a fundamental vitality back of the Revolution which the capitalistic West must meet by at least some genuine attempt to put its own house in order. He does not believe capitalism as at present practiced in Europe and America, nor communism with its denial of liberty as at present practiced in Russia, represents any final stage in man's evolutionary development. There must, he thinks, be some higher synthesis of individual liberty and social coöperation, and it is toward this as yet untried synthesis that he sees the Russian experiment making its possibly blind but nevertheless imperative challenge. A useful book, to be read in connection with such excellently journalistic, if slightly hurrahboy accounts, as Mr. Knickerbocker's lively reports on the progress of the Five Year Plan.

E. M. Delafield and Ethel Mannin have joined the small band of women novelists who are also playwrights, says *John O'London's Weekly*. Miss Mannin has collaborated in a sketch and is working from time to time on a full-length play. Miss Delafield's first play is already in rehearsal at a London theatre, and is shortly to be produced.

The Virtue of Fortitude

GRAND HOTEL. By VICKI BAUM. Translated by BASIL CREIGHTON. New York: Doubleday, Doran. 1931.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS is the novel from which was taken the play of the same name, which is enjoying a highly successful run in New York. As readers of New York dramatic criticisms know already, it covers thirty-six hours in a fashionable and expensive hotel in Berlin. Through it pass a variety of people, each the protagonist of an entire drama that he carries with him; the dramas meet and intersect, although probability is never sacrificed to plot (it is worth remarking that the various stories are not quite so closely interdependent in the novel as in the play); each reaches its climax at least, if not its conclusion; and the actors have their bags brought down and leave, and other men and women hire their rooms. The effect is somewhat like the cross-section of life achieved in "Street Scene" or "The Forty-second Parallel," but it differs from them in not being so conscientiously inconclusive. In it the hotel is more than a background, like that of "Street Scene"; it is an important influence, which gives its provincial inhabitants a recklessness that they

HILAIRE BELLOC

A caricature by Low, reproduced from "Lions and Lambs" (Harcourt, Brace).

never have had. When they go out of it they are changed, and though we do not in all cases see the exterior results of it, the inner and essential play is over, as the real tragedy of Brutus is completed when he stabs Caesar, whatever may be the outcome of Philippi.

The conception is unusual, powerful, and fine, but the initial conception is overshadowed by its development. One may say, by way of giving very high praise to the book, that in the beginning, when the night porter calls the hospital to inquire about his wife's delivery, and the hideously mutilated soldier takes up another day of his utterly empty life of sitting in the lobby, one grasps the cyclic conception of the book, and admires it; whereas at the end, when the porter hears that his wife is safe after her childbirth, and the wounded man settles down for another day's idle watching, and the new guests arrive, one is disappointed in the conclusion one has foreseen. It is not that the design is any less good, but that it has come to seem mechanical in contrast to the richness of life that has made up the body of the book.

The great value of the book lies in its character drawing, and of the characters, one hardly knows which to admire most. Perhaps the most poignant is the Russian ballet dancer, growing old and growing unfashionable as well, always facing the possibility of failure with the audience after a career of triumph, and yet refusing to retire because she is the last of the true dancers of the old ballet. The passage in which she speaks of her art, which to most of us seems trivial and useless, as the abstraction of grace, the mathematical perfection of movement, is as breath-taking a revelation as "A Grammarian's Funeral" read for the first time. Or there is Kringelein, the poor bookkeeper from the provinces, whose doctor has told him that he has not long to live, and who is to live like a rich man for the time he has left—a common enough figure in novels, but never before made so ridiculous and courageous and memorable. And there are half a dozen others.

From them all, different as they are, one tries to guess at the personality of the author, who stays resolutely out of sight. There is in the book, nowhere expressed, but not to be missed, an attitude to life that will set the reader eëxaming philosophies. There is the bursting energy that we can expect from Berlin. There is an absence of moral reprobation that completely takes one with it. The little stenographer, Flämmchen, consents to become the mistress of a man she loathes in her flesh, "for money." Well, as she says, she knows the poverty where "you can't open the window because the warm air has cost money; you can't have a bath because hot water means coals"—why shouldn't she? The handsome, athletic, likable Baron von Gaigern lives by gambling and robbery; well, war has spoilt him for peace, and that is the only way he has found to live dangerously—why shouldn't he?

Besides all this, there are one or two incomplete philosophies expressed by the characters. Doctor Otternschlag, who has half a face and a glass eye in the midst of scar tissue for the other half, feels that nothing matters; every day he decides to keep his room for one day more, and sits down to do nothing. Gaigern lives for excitement; Kringelein, when he begins to live, for pleasure; Grusinskaya, the dancer, for a vanishing ideal. And Fraulein Baum, the author? her philosophy seems to be a new stoicism. Fortitude is the first of the virtues, perhaps the only virtue; the admirable characters are all admirable for that; the most unhappy are so for want of it. In a world so cruel as this, fortitude makes up for all. And pity is one more of the pains of life, to be felt to the full, to be courted as Gaigern courts fatigue and danger or the Spartans courted pain; that we may guess, for no one could have imagined the whole story of Grusinskaya who did not know the feeling of pity; but it is not to be yielded to, not to be given an inch; that also is plain, for "Grand Hotel" has not a trace of pity in the writing. This stoicism has said to itself "Be hard," with more reason than Nietzsche ever had; it will not spare itself or others; it is admirable and fearful; it may be a force to reckon with; it is certainly a force to understand. "Grand Hotel" is a book to read.

Shylock Redrawn

THE LAST DAYS OF SHYLOCK. By LUDWIG LEWISOHN. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1931.

Reviewed by FREDERIC TABOR COOPER

IN this volume, somewhat inadequately called "The Last Days of Shylock," Mr. Lewisohn has tried a curious and rather interesting experiment; not in the mere writing of a sequel to a familiar literary masterpiece—since for that he has abundant precedents—but in the basic purpose of his attempt and in the sustained spirit of its working out.

Pondering over "The Merchant of Venice," he finds that Shakespeare drew a distorted and misleading picture, so psychologically unjust, so substantially false to history, that he has been moved to present his own conception of Shylock, sympathetically, even admiringly, against the actual background of sixteenth century Venice, in all its outward splendor, secret intrigue, and iron despotism.

The result is a well documented, scholarly volume, rich in atmosphere and scenic setting, brimming with anecdote and incident straight out of ancient records; a grim, colorful mosaic of a century of fanatical oppression, a solid, substantial piece of research, unrelieved by any saving sense of humor. Obviously, then, it is something quite different, something much broader and deeper than is suggested by the title. While Shylock himself remains the focal point, and all that happens, all that he suffers, witnesses, learns at second hand, is consistently seen through his eyes and colored by his reactions, this is less a biography than a tragic chapter of history, set forth with a sombre brilliance and epic sweep: the Children of Israel in that wider House of Bondage, the collective Ghettos of Renaissance Europe.

Seen from this angle, the mood and tempo of the story are admirably sustained. Dimly in the background we glimpse the shimmering loveliness of Venice, with its rainbow wealth of color, its sunlit canals mirroring back the sculptured and gilded palaces, its snatches of gay southern laughter and lilting song. But all this is overladen and drowned out by an ever-present sense of drab desolation and impending doom. And through the pages runs a deep-voiced *leitmotiv* of sonorous Hebrew ritual, snatches from the Talmud and the Scriptures, a muffled echo of Jeremiah. All Europe, seen through Shylock's eyes, is only a wider Wailing Place.

Mr. Lewisohn's Shylock is so far removed from

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his Shakespearian prototype that a common denominator is lacking. He is no cringing, miserly bargain-driver, but an aristocrat, a connoisseur of art, a banker of opulence and far-reaching power, secretly interested in the borrowings of kings and emperors, with a finger on the financial pulse of Christendom. In religion he is the most orthodox of Jews with the learning of a Rabbi; a philanthropist, whose charities to his own people are limitless. He has personally ransomed from bondage more Jewish slaves than "all the holy congregations of Naples or Venice." A tender-hearted man, shrinking from blood and vengeance, well aware that he never could have brought himself to carry to conclusion his grim jest of a pound of flesh.

The novel opens with the close of the trial scene, where Shylock, having spoken his memorable lines, "I pray you give me leave to go from hence, I am not well," stumbles from the court room, shorn of his ducats and his daughter, and with his very life in jeopardy unless he forthwith turn Christian. We follow him home, through the sordid, narrow Ghetto alleys, climb with him interminable stairs to the garret floor. And there, in an apartment surprisingly rich in costly hangings and priceless furnishings, cherished art treasures he must shortly leave behind, we share throughout the night his bitter memories, as his troubled old mind gropes backward through the long vista of past injustice.

There were early terrors and humiliations in childhood; but in those days the Jews were not segregated. It was not until after his marriage, although years before Jessica was born, that there came the expulsion of the Jews, rich and poor alike, from their homes, their sad pilgrimage through the streets of Venice, followed by jeers, insults, and showers of stones, to the squalid Ghetto where they were herded. Then later came a persecution even harder to bear: the seizure and public burning of their sacred books, when more than three thousand books of prayer and illuminated Esther Megolith were shoveled into filthy carts, to go up in flames. And then still another more recent memory, the horror of which was forever seared into his brain; when at Ancona over a hundred Marranos, or converted Jews, were charged with the crime of "secret Judaizing," and although the Turkish Sultan interfered in their behalf, no less than twenty-four died in flames to make an Italian holiday.

These memories, a sombre, close-woven fabric of Jewish chronicle, occupy almost half of the present volume. The remainder deals with that later part of Shylock's life suggested in the title: his public profession, on the morrow, of Christian faith, amid the colorful beauty of San Marco, where as his trembling old lips form false denial of his fixed beliefs, he takes comfort in the knowledge that his soul is still his own. Then his secret escape from Venice, with the bulk of his fortune saved; his refuge with powerful Jewish friends, high in favor with the Sultan; and later, his work as head of a sort of early Zionist movement, an attempt to reëstablish Israel in Palestine, by rebuilding the ruined walls of Tiberias. And in these chapters Mr. Lewisohn is evidently setting forth the trials and the opposition that face any Zionist movement, past, present, or future, in the unchanging East.

Such in brief is the rather big, ambitious, many-sided task that Mr. Lewisohn set himself. And its success, one would say, varies in direct ratio with the individual reader's ability to forget the all too familiar, too haunting lines of "The Merchant of Venice." These "Last Days of Shylock" are essentially what Mr. Kipling would call "another story," and its effect is weakened each time that the author drags in other characters from the play in attempts to tie up closer to his starting point. To take just one instance: who, with the memory fresh in mind of that idyllic love scene between Lorenzo and Jessica, with its refrain, "In such a night as this," can accept with equanimity a disillusioned Jessica, abandoned by Lorenzo, creeping like a beaten dog to her father's feet with her three young sons, while he, Shylock, promptly has these three grandsons circumcized, naming them Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? As already pointed out, Mr. Lewisohn lacks a saving sense of humor.

To sum up: Shakespeare was writing robust Elizabethan comedy, little concerned with historic niceties; and his Shylock is a tragic grotesque, a symbolic figure of greed and rancor and revenge, and the name has passed into our spoken language as the equivalent of just those qualities. Now, you may successfully redraw a distorted portrait of a serious sort. But it is futile to try to make a flattering likeness out of a deliberate caricature; you can't recarve a gargoyle into a Moses. And that, in brief, is what Mr. Lewisohn tried to do.

A Plot Against Rome

TWO THIEVES. By MANUEL KOMROFF. New York: Coward-McCann. 1931.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS
Author of "Giant Killer"

MR. KOMROFF'S considerable talents are here employed to no special consequence. The two thieves of the title are the two crucified on either side of Jesus, and the book is the history of their unsuccessful plot to overthrow Roman rule in Judea. Mr. Komroff evokes a plausible and picturesque background, despite occasional inaccuracies in detail, and displays considerable ingenuity in devising the truly Oriental tricks his heroes play on the Romans. But it all comes to nothing through a series of accidents, as great plans have a way of coming to nothing; and the author imparts no great significance to their failure—and what is more serious, no great interest.

As for Jesus, he never appears, is never named. One catches echoes of his doings—the driving out of the money changers, the healing of a blind man, Pilate's uneasy remorse; but even on the hill of Golgotha the interest of the heroes is naturally concentrated on their own crucifixion, not on that of the man between them, and the reader's interest too. This is irony in the Greek sense—but it is irony only if you do something with it; as (to cite the classic instance) Anatole France did in "The Procurator of Judea." Mr. Komroff does nothing with it, so his book becomes merely an adventure story of a not particularly distinguished sort.

A Family Saga

THE RING OF THE LOWENSKOLDS. By SELMA LAGERLOF. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by PHILLIPS CARLETON

LIKE so many of Selma Lagerlöf's books, "The Ring of the Lowenskölds" begins far back in folk myth and ends in the pietistic revival of the 'nineties. It is a tale of a ring stolen from a grave, of a curse put upon a family by one to whom it brought sorrow, of the misfortunes of a family, or rather of the young son of this family in a later generation. The first third of the book is sheer pageantry: the feudal country side, nemesis from the grave pursuing the ring, the ordeal of the casting of the dice, the casual hauntings of a determined ghost—pleasant folk-lore. With the second volume the real novel begins—the drama of a young man too sure of the way of God to be aware of the world about him or of the weakness of his own flesh. Like Milne, however, Selma Lagerlöf believes that "cheerfulness and decency will somehow insist on breaking through."

Selma Lagerlöf, daughter of a semi-feudal landowner, fell heir to a great tradition, an unbroken line of folk memories, a past glorious beyond the meed of a little country, which possessed a warrior king who subdued half of Europe. She possesses all the virtues of a landowning aristocracy; she is urbane, fluent, tolerant, and sympathetic; she has a wide knowledge of her people and an understanding of them, but she is, above all, almost naively romantic. It is this romanticism that makes her stories charming; that has kept thousands of people awake late at night following all the turnings and windings of her great volumes. But this romanticism has also stamped her work with an air of unreality and glamor. From "The Saga of Gösta Berling" to the present volume her characters move in a magic atmosphere of a mirror world, with a disarming simplicity about them. Beside her, her rival across the Norwegian mountains—Sigrid Undset—seems abrupt and harsh, but her tales of a medieval period are strung to an intensity of mental agony that makes them startlingly alive. For Sigrid Undset was faced with the problem of creating out of the darkness of the past a tradition that had been lost, of recovering a life that had passed out of folk memory with the subjection of Norway to another nation. Compare "The Ring of the Lowenskölds" with "The Master of Hestwick" to see this difference emphasized. One is intensely subjective, dark with mental turmoil; the other is almost entirely objective, always aware of the small stage and the stage trappings. Yet it is this objectivity and simplicity that are the greatest charm of Selma Lagerlöf, a charm that the severest criticism must recognize.

Two reasons account for the author's great talent as a storyteller, and also for the rather thin quality of her work. The first is that she has always before her a sequence of historical figures that she simply vivifies without making them an expression of herself. The second is that she is prevented by the continuity of the life spread before her from becoming unduly sentimental though she does skirt perilously near to the shoals of sentimentality; a little veering, a scant emphasis on the emotions of her characters, would change this novel from a clear, cool tale, to a lush extravaganza. The young minister barely avoids becoming a pure force of hypocritic villainy; Charlotte, unjustly deserted, escapes the bathos of self-sacrifice through the understanding of her friends; Anna, "the bride chosen of God," has a sturdy and independent habit of life to fall back upon. The tethers of actuality and local history keep the story within bounds. Selma Lagerlöf uses pastels or water colors in all her compositions; her characters have an inevitable gracefulness, but they lack depth and solidity.

Free Air

(*Continued from page* 577)

which American broadcasters aim, one circuit at least which can be counted on to yield varied entertainment and instruction of a civilized character throughout the radio day.

Is it too much to ask an air monopoly which has already confined the much talked of educational features of the radio to the hours of the day when the fewest number can listen, whether one wave length at least may not be reserved for the anti-tripists? And may we gently remind them, that since their business *is* run for profit making, that such a concession to taste and the welfare of American culture would cost them little, and bring back almost sure rewards. For the radio is not like a newspaper or a book. The inconvenience for the tripe lover if he should turn by accident to such an admirable air play as the English are now publishing, or to the measures of a string quartet is no greater than our pain when the loud speaker blares "Hello Jimmie" in skim milk soprano, or the announcer tells us "Don't forget the merits of form-fitting suspenders," as we pass along the dial. Such annoyances are trivial, if only there is somewhere between 600 and infinity one wave length upon which the man or woman who has learned to read good books, see good plays, hear good music, and discriminate between rot and sense, can thankfully rest.

"If you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" And not by a buyer's strike merely. This dangerous exploitation of everything public in the interests of profit making, is a disease of capitalism, of which capitalism must be cured if it is to compete with state socialism, communism, and other forms of public control incompatible with American experience. It is always the minority that leads, either toward social change or social reformation, and it is not wise, even in so trivial a matter as the exploiting of their free air, to spit at their rights.

Under the editorial direction of Thomas Martin, General Secretary of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, Faraday's Diary is soon to begin to appear. It is a record of his experimental work throughout his life, and though the scientist drew on it in the preparation of his books, it has never itself been published. The work when completed will probably run to six or eight volumes.

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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The Bowling Green

John Mistletoe, XXV.

GOING into the kitchen late at night for a glass of milk I often find myself thinking of B. H. in the old office of the *Evening Ledger*. In that office Mistletoe had under his desk a jug of cider someone had given him. Bart twirled himself a drinking horn out of a sheet of copypaper (a knack all newspaper men acquired in those days before little cardboard goblets became universal) and accepted a swig of the rural nectar. He stood for an instant in earnest afterthought. "By gracious, it makes all the strong stuff taste like poison," he said, and went back to the editorial he was writing.

It does indeed. These hours of midnight silence bring a very mute and private plainness. One is content with elemental things, fire and fatigue and bread and milk. Analogy, the oxygen of the mind, is all around you. The old dog, grown uneasy, drums the floor with his shin as he pursues some irritation; then turns and turns and settles himself for sleep. Wise and harmless as Socrates, fine old gentledog, he comes softly toward his end. He has no complaint and nothing to regret. The fire is fallen low on the hearth, just a deep marigold crumble; yet more than once, by some pocketing of soot in the flue that same comfortable chimney has roared with terrorizing flame. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night (is there any literature greater than our Book of Proverbs?) words of truth come back to you, words wrung out of men and women in the twist of life. Once I heard it said, "But I don't want to do the unusual. I want to do just the commonest things."

* * *

I have no idea what Bart was discussing in that editorial, and even the building in which he was writing it has disappeared; but his chance comment on the pleasures of simplicity has remained as durable as fable.

It was probably during one of those interludes of talk that punctuate the afternoon in the editorial rooms of an evening paper. Someone, hard at work, is struck by an idea, but before unloading it on the public he hankers to discuss it a bit. Bart and Jimmy and Mistletoe would find themselves adrift in some badly leaking argument—so uncaulked the very rats instinctively have quit it, but exciting to scull about in. Perhaps it was the paregoric qualities of Woodrow Wilson's prose style, or efficiency at Hog Island, or how soon Pershing would straighten out the St. Mihiel salient. Very likely the latter; a huge map of the battle-fronts was tacked up on the wall near Mistletoe's desk, and Jimmy's first affair every morning was to redraw the lines in accordance with the latest dispatches. Breathing hard, his short plump figure would mount the table to reach the map, and ejaculate "Pop goes the Vesle" as his black pencil included that stream in the regained territory. The argument would go on until the Doc, senior editorial writer, grunting to himself over his leader, would show signs of impatience, probably toward the spittoon. The juniors would remember uneasily that time was flitting and their copy not up yet. Jimmy, solemnly sucking that large curve-stem pipe, waddles back to his encyclopædias to compose the Daily Quiz, a list of questions on general information which was an esteemed feature of our page. Mistletoe bends farther into that cavernous old rolltop hunting for rhymes for his column. And Bart, with a quiet definiteness of purpose which I can see still, strides back to his typewriter. I see his well barbered gray head intent over the keyboard. There was always a grim docility about the way he returned to the task after one of those flurries of conversation.

* * *

The best illustration of that disciplined instinct was an innocent but well-remembered occasion when some serious-minded editors took a case of Scotch out to the suburbs for their friend Madrigal. It was a gift from a generous Caliph, to solemnize the End of an Era; on the following day the transport of spirits would become unconstitutional. Madrigal had been laid up at home with a serious flu, so one nicknamed the Soothsayer volunteered to transport the goods in his car. It was a brilliant morning of sunshine on snow, the world glittered in lustres of crystal. Arrived chez Madrigal, and a bottle of the Old Vatted Traymore broached to honor the occasion, the invalid poet began to ettle. The frozen purity of weather tempted him, against cosy domestic counsel. Blanched earth and flashing sun prevailed. Warmly wrapped, and with the bottle in case of relapse, they were to go as far as Jenkintown on some errand connected with an antique chair. This accomplished and the forenoon seeming progressively more radiant, they drove out into open country where the untouched dazzle of snowfields suggested enlargement and caper. There was also a long icy furrow in the road very tempting for tests of equilibrium. They left the car, and there followed an interval of physical rapture which hypocritic memory finds hard to regain and which to the calm eye of Authority would have appeared undignified. It remains one of those lunatic seizures one would least willingly forego. A species of Eskimo saltarello was devised, followed by a game of tag which seemed to involve bursting through ice-spun bramble hedges and rolling in drifts. There was some notion of setting about an igloo, but presently the thought of the Philadelphia public, patiently waiting to be enlightened upon large affairs, became imminent. To turn the car around on that ice-sheathed way was not easy. In doing so they had a skid into the ditch and a severe jolt against a telephone pole. They deposited the antique chair at its destination, where Madrigal handsomely embraced the startled lady of the house, who was much younger than the chair; lunched well at the Bellevue, not realizing until too late that their features were blue with frostbite and scarred with thorns; and returned earnestly to their desks. They set about their jobs. When the copy was finished, and the really noble anaesthesia of the adventure had worn off, one of them remarked a pain in his side. He discovered afterward that he had written his daily stint with a broken rib. As for the ailing poet, instead of dying of pneumonia, his influenza was completely cured.

* * *

Every man who has done newspaper work, whatever his rational conclusions, looks back with affection and nostalgia on that life of busy nerves. The pressure of passing time, the sense of anonymous power, a sort of offhand bohemianism and untidyness, a naive conviction of being behind the scenes in the human comedy, are partial elements in a very subtle feeling. Mistletoe's newspaper experience, which he loved to the full, was always anomalous. It would justly be scoffed at by those who have gone in orderly fashion through the customary grades of progress. He began, in sheer hazard, by writing the Leading Editorial on his first day in the office. He got his job when one of those periodical shake-ups had happened, a number of highly skilled journalists had been wafted away in a sudden concussion and a new editor found himself with only a few hours to reorganize his staff. That very day the news of the last great German push toward the Channel was coming through, and J. M. happened to be the one available who knew most about the geography of the terrain. Beginning thus at the top of the profession, by some hasty bombast about military strategy (and leaders in the old *Evening Ledger* really were leaders, set in 10-point blackface so the reader might be certain they were important) he gradually declined through various levels of work, of which occasional sports reporter was undoubtedly his favorite. But he also maintains that there is no fun like writing what they used to call "ears"—editorial paragraphs with an indented blackface head; the nicety of which depends on completing or tilting the innuendo of the paragraph in the three or four brief words allowed for the "ear." The skill of newspaper paragraphing can rise to Baconian dexterity, and it pleases me to think of unsuspected brothers at distant typewriters who may at this very instant be feeling the thrill of a well-turned ear uncoiling from the machine. They have, for the moment, that rare and pure satisfaction of the unthanked artist. They see the anonymous little missile spinning off on a long curve into space. Many many chances are against it; the downward pull of gravity is heavy indeed; but perhaps, somewhere, it will reach the sensitive cheek muscle of the possible reader. Once, in the *Evening Post*, Mistletoe wrote:—

> The other evening, riding on the train, we saw a man reading the editorial page of the *Journal*. We couldn't see just what he was reading, because he was sitting opposite. But on his cheek, as he read, there wavered a faint crease, a quiet flitting smile that meant that the writer, whoever he was, had touched his spirit of comprehension. That cheek muscle is what all writers are aiming at. When you are reading something you thoroughly enjoy, something that tickles the sense of quiet appreciation of human ways that most men have in some degree, that cheek muscle twitches and trembles. It is not a question of laughter; it is far deeper than that. Perhaps that cheek muscle, and not the fabled pineal gland, is the true residence of the soul. Whoever was writing on the *Journal's* editorial page that evening—or perhaps it was the cartoonist—had succeeded in his job, had turned the trick that all writers crave.

* * *

There was never a pleasanter cameraderie anywhere than in that row of little kennels in the old *Ledger* building. Like the officers' cabins in an old sailing ship they stretched in suite forward from the skipper's quarters, the Editor's office. Alongside them was the hurrying drama of the City Room, and under their windows and antique iron fire-escapes the romantic thoroughfare of one of America's oldest streets, with Independence Hall chiming the hours a few yards away. Down that street came Wilson and Joffre and Pershing and all the headline figures of the War; and up it, more troubling to the eyes, brown ranks with the Keystone shoulder tab, thankful to be back. Veterans of an even larger war, too: Louis, the old balloon peddler, with swaying airy leash of colored globes, sometimes transfigured by diagonal sunlight into an Atlas bearing bubble-worlds of soapsud sheen; and Blind Al, the newsdealer, tapping his stick on the pavement. Underlings in journalism, however docile in print, are usually great sea-lawyers after office hours, irreverent questioners of authority, iconoclasts of public statuary, rippers of stuffed shirts, dowsers for hidden well-springs of doctrine. Sometimes the Soothsayer would drive them out to his favorite roadhouse along the Schuylkill, and there the perversity of earth would be well threshed. One of their favorite theorems was that the formula for a successful newspaper could easily be calculated. Yes, said one, quoting Hearst: Plenty of crime and plenty of underclothes.—It's like a patent medicine, said another. A chemist told me that every drug nostrum has three standard ingredients: a narcotic, a laxative, and a bitter.—The news is a narcotic, someone cried, and our editorial stuff is certainly a laxative. But what's the bitter?—That's the circulation department.—Sometimes the Managing Editor would join them; dour at first, but warming to his theme after a glass of wine. Do you remember, he would exclaim, poor Keats's dream was that his brother's descendants should grow up to be the first American poets? And what did they grow up to be? The Managing Editors of newspapers!

* * *

That crowded rolltop, which grew gradually deeper in litter, was Tom Daly's old desk. And here is Tom himself, singer of Robert Burns charm and incomparable narrator of comedy, waiting at the Ben Franklin statue on the broad pavement outside the post-office. He is rolling a cigarette, his bright compelling Irish eye has already noted his young crony hurrying along Chestnut Street. He puts on a cool don't-know-you air and pretends to pass by; but he can't keep up the joke, for something has happened that tickles his antic fancy, he can hardly wait to impart it. How many things there were that must be told, at once, Oh instantly, by or to Tom. Whatever it was, he will unfold it with incorrigible skill, over one of the little tables at Dooner's.

For the best part of three years they must have lunched together three or four times a week, and in all that time Mistletoe never heard Tom tell the same story twice, unless by request. Lifelong habitué of that region, he knew all the best resorts for scrapple, or oyster stew, or any other fine Philadelphia feeding. (I almost hesitate to mention Tom and Jerry, that wintry elixir of eggs, sugar, brandy, rum, hot milk, and nutmeg, not wishing to disgust with life a younger generation that has hardly even heard of it. There was in Green's Hotel a painting of a racehorse which, after two Tom and Jerries, could be seen to cock its ears and whisk its tail.) One day Mistletoe, scouting on his own, discovered a little Italian café on South 9th Street. Knowing Tom's delightful verses in Italo-American he dragged the poet thither in triumph. There, usually the only patrons, they lunched scores of times while Mistletoe revelled in the rich oily gravies, frittura mista, scallopini, spaghetti and ravioli and mushrooms. But meanwhile the poet, not usually slow in announcing his tastes, seemed to be suffering an atrophy. Finally, when the dark-eyed Rosa offered him as special delicacy some pink and very dissecting-room-looking small cuttlefish, he broke down. He was constrained to confess that he did not really care for Italian cooking. They returned

(*Continued on page* 583)

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Reviewing in America

MOST men who have been frequent reviewers of books and who have reached a certain stage of their professional literary life, are apt to consider for themselves whether, from any point of view, it is worth while to continue to review regularly. Most, I think, eventually decide that it is not. The public is not concerned, perhaps, with these decisions but it ought to be with the conditions that deter so many from continuing when the need for a succession of meager checks has ceased to exist or when time has become too valuable to waste on an unrewarding occupation.

In considering the value of any work, one naturally considers it with relation to one's self and with relation to the work. One may toil hard over something that brings adequate return to one's self even if the immediate return to the world is slight; and, on the other hand, one may also be content to toil over something that is personally of slight benefit if one is sustained by the feeling that he is performing what is thought to be a valuable and important service for others. As book reviewing stands in America to-day, both these rewards are tending to disappear.

Let us look first at the sordid but necessary question of pay. In the past twenty years the cost of practically everything that a reviewer spends his paycheck on has either doubled or quadrupled in cost. A banana has doubled and a cook has quadrupled; with clothes, rent, and every other item falling somewhere in between in the advanced scale. Journals guard their pay secrets carefully but, from what information I have been able to glean, the pay for reviewing has advanced in the best cases fifty per cent. In other words in order to get just where he was twenty years ago, a reviewer has got to write from two to four times as many reviews. If we contrast the situation of the American with the English reviewer, we find that the latter is better off than his American *confrère*. My English literary agent has recently given me the going rates for all sorts of writing in English journals. Owing to the enormous mass of advertising carried, American magazines can pay far higher than the English. In writing for the former one gets from five to ten times what he gets from the latter. But here is the interesting point for this present essay. The regular English book reviewer gets exactly the same as the highest priced American reviewer. There are two points to be noticed as to this. In the first place, although the rate per word is the same on the two sides of the water, the purchasing power in England is so much greater as to mean that the English reviewer gets far more than the American. You can, for example, secure a comfortable little house in London in a good and convenient neighborhood for $800 to $1,000 a year even now, and a cook for $250 a year. Contrast that with New York.

In the second place, and this is even more important, the English reviewer gets the same rate for his work that he would get for an article in the *Fortnightly* or *Contemporary* or any other leading monthly magazine, whereas in America he gets, as reviewer, one fifth or one-tenth what he would get if he put his article into another shape. This means two things, first, that in England, a man who has bills to consider, as most literary men have, can afford to give his time to a careful review just as readily as to a considered magazine article; and, secondly, that reviewing is considered as important and useful a field of literary work as article writing.

Every scholar and man of letters expects to do, in the course of a year, a good deal of work for absurdly low or no pay, just as a doctor with a decent professional sense expects to do likewise. Just that point is, or used to be, one of those which differentiates the professional from the business spirit. One expects, and does, contribute reviews for nothing at all or two dollars a page to professional journals of one sort and another. But there should be no need of that in work intended for a wide public in a newspaper or journal which is making large profits. The literary man is, of course, always considered fair game. His ideas and their expression are his livelihood, but whereas no one would dream of asking his broker to execute an order without commissions, the literary man is constantly asked to lecture or write for nothing. In to-day's mail, for example, comes a request to contribute a four page estimate of a great public character for a book which is to consist wholly of such estimates. The editor, publisher, printer, paper-maker, and all the rest will get full pay, but the literary men who make the book are asked to contribute their work for nothing. Any man of letters knows how frequent such invitations are. But reviewing of books for the great journals in the richest nation in the world, with a hundred and twenty million people, should not be considered as involving an act of charity toward his fellow countrymen by the reviewer, which is what it amounts to now. When an American book reviewer is asked to work for what is the equivalent in purchasing power of about one-half or less of what he did twenty years ago or for less than his English *confrère* gets, he may well ask why? We are continually deluged with statistics to prove the great prosperity and high standard of living to be derived from the "high-wage" theory and practice of the United States. Is the book reviewer such an unimportant factor in the national life that he should be penalized financially, or does the American public insist upon receiving charity from him?

Again, mass-production journalism is doing much to lower the status of reviewing. Not so long ago, when a great daily was purchased and the new owner decided to increase the circulation, the literary editors, who had built up one of the best book review sections in the country, were bluntly told to "cut out the high-brow" to meet the increased moronism of an increased circulation. That case, although celebrated, is by no means unique. Indeed, the latest one has only recently occurred, in another daily of formerly high tradition. In another case, the literary editor of a great journal discovered the fact of his own dismissal only by reading it in his own paper at the breakfast table. No one had taken the trouble to mention it to him at the office. With this new journalistic trend, is it little wonder that men do not care to ally themselves too closely with the reviewing page of most of our newspapers? A good prize fight reporter appears to be of more importance, and safer in his job.

ALL this brings us to the second estimate of the value of a man's work. If he is not getting much out of it himself, is he contributing anything considered essential or valuable by the nation? As far as the nation's own opinion is concerned, it would seem as though the reviewer would have sorrowfully to say, no. One has one's choice of writing for the great dailies or for the more "high brow" weeklies. As to the former I must presume that the editors know their business, but I could "tales unfold" that would much surprise the public. I desist, but will merely note that, for one thing, from the standpoint of the American daily, a book is merely "news." Not so long ago, I was asked as a favor by a literary editor hard-pressed for space, to review ten books on a Sunday in one article of two thousand words. Before my review had time to get back, the editors had changed, and the new one, perhaps harder pressed than the old, cut out half the article, leaving four books mentioned in the headlines unmentioned in my text. I have not seldom been given two or three days to review a four or five hundred page scholarly work, because the date of the review was so much more important than its quality. In the *Literary Supplement of the London Times* books are reviewed as books, not noted as news, and the English reader appears to prefer to wait a month, if needful, to get an adequate review rather than a dashed-off notice.

As for our more literary weeklies, I can only say that as far as I can see the public does not support them. Two of the most important are notoriously supported by private means and not as profitable enterprises, and the *Saturday Review*, which is our leading literary weekly, is supposed to have done very well when, in a country with three times the population of England and vastly greater free wealth at the moment, it has not much more circulation than the *London Times Supplement*, which is not a supplement in the American sense but a separate weekly publication. The comparison would remain damning if we were to take the white population of the Empire and not merely England as a basis for comparison.

In America the syndicated review has appeared. The same review is published all over the country as though it were an independent expression of individual critical opinion. In one mail recently I received four reviews of my last book, from as many papers in as many states, all being the same review. In this way, the journal saves money, gets perhaps a better review, and some underpaid reviewer gets somewhat more pay, but the system has its bad points. The voice of Nashville, Walla Walla, San Antonio, Sacramento, and a dozen other places, may be merely the same voice, damning or praising. A nation-wide "claque," for or against a book, may thus be set up. "Thirty cities praise this book" may be only one overworked writer who has learned how to syndicate his "stuff."

It is said, rather unjustly, that every nation gets the sort of government it deserves. There are limitations to that statement, but in general it is true, and applies to other things as well. One certainly cannot blame the editors of the weeklies for the inadequate pay given their reviewers as compared with America twenty years ago or with England. One cannot, perhaps, though I am not so sure, blame the editors of the daily press. The blame falls squarely on the American public, which would bankrupt the publishers of, say, such a magazine as the *Mercure de France*, between luncheon and dinner. The fact remains that in Europe the book reviewer is a competent critic; in America he is all too often merely someone who needs ten or twenty dollars. The rich American public looks down on poverty stricken Europe. Is there any reason why one should throw crumbs of charity to a public that declines to pay for its book reviewing? Why not let it get the sort of book reviewing it pays for, even if it be done by the office stenographer? As contrasted with Europe, the American public appears to be mean or uneducated. If it is mean, it is not an object of charity being rich as it is. If it is merely uneducated, perhaps there is still an obligation to give it book reviews at rates below those paid in war-torn Europe. What is the answer?

One obvious one is that the public does not care for genuinely good reviewing. Generalizations about America are dangerous but one at least may be made safely, and that is that whatever the American public really wants it will pay, and pay well, to get. It is the universal opinion of editors that it will not pay well for reviewing. For a literary man with a good general background and with a somewhat specialized knowledge of his special reviewing field, it is not a difficult matter to toss off five hundred to a thousand words on any volume which comes his way after a cursory reading, but genuinely good reviewing calls for much more than this. I shall not here go into the problem of just how a review should be written but unquestionably the reviewer should have worked out for himself some definite philosophy of criticism in whatever field he is working; he should have accurate knowledge of what has gone on and is going on in that field; and he should be able to appraise critically the volume which he is reviewing. Of the six thousand volumes published in America last autumn perhaps ninety per cent were not worth more careful notice than is given to any ephemeral cinema film. I am not discussing those but that part of our literary or scholarly production which both for itself and for the sake of building up a tradition of culture should receive genuinely critical treatment by competent reviewers. Both for the public and the authors themselves it is of the utmost importance that there should be a body of genuine critics in the country whose individual voices would carry weight. I do not mean at all a gray-bearded academy but a body of critics who have both the training and the time to be able to place a new work of importance in relation to principles and the background of other similar work rather than merely to their own hasty and personal reaction. To develop the proper equipment for a reviewer takes time and thought, as does the proper consideration of any particular volume reviewed, if it is of sufficient importance for a first-class reviewer to bother with it at all.

As I glance over the field of American book reviewing at present, the reviewers appear to fall into three classes in general. There are, first, the incompetents who write a vast mass of "notices" which

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by James Truslow Adams

circulate through the country as "literary criticism," and which would be negligible except for their evil effect. Next come a great many good men who in the midst of busy professional and often underpaid lives write a review now and then for the sake of a little honorable publicity and a small but much-needed check. Writing a review is merely an occasional occurrence for them and they make no pretence to being trained critics. Thirdly, there is the group made up of men who write reviews for one reason and another but who make a considerable pecuniary sacrifice by doing so. If they are professional writers they realize while they are reading the book under consideration and trying to write a serious estimate of it that they might be spending the same number of hours on work that would bring them in five or ten times as much money for their family expenses and vastly more reputation in the eyes of the public. When a man, which happens once in a blue moon, throws himself wholeheartedly into genuine critical work, like a Stuart Sherman, he is killed by overwork at forty-four.

I do not mean, as I have said before, that a literary man does not expect to do much work for little or no pay, but there is a limit to the amount of such work that he can do if he has a family to support, and it ought to be confined to work that commands only a limited audience. There is no reason why work commanding a large audience should be paid at starvation wages if depended upon as any considerable part of a man's total output. As conditions are at present in America, book reviewing is the only form of literary work which is both important and published for wide circulation that is heavily discriminated against in the matter of payment. Without writing fiction or for the mass circulation journals, a man may receive fair pay for any sort of writing except literary criticism if his writing is intrinsically worth anything. As a literary critic, no matter how good, he is damned financially.

Yet with the new vast output from the press and with a reading public being steadily augmented in equally vast herds from classes which have no standards, it is more essential than ever that a genuine criticism should be developed. We cannot trust to the cheap "book notices" in the papers, and publishers themselves often do the utmost they can to befuddle the public taste by their blurbs and frequently unfair and misleading excerpts from "criticisms." I see no hope for the creation of new standards in the new public save from the emergence of genuine critics, who, like Sherman, when they do emerge, gain a very large following. We cannot expect Shermans every day, but we should be able to develop a body of sound, conscientious, and well-known critics, who are primarily critics and not authors or professors doing just an odd job now and then in reviewing. I do not see how we are likely to do so, however, so long as book reviewing is so heavily discriminated against in the matter of pay in contrast to almost any other form of serious literary work, and so long as the public, as evidenced by editors, look upon book reviewing as a sort of fourth-rate form of news, written by men who have not the guts to report a fight or a murder. Of course, there is a small section of the public that does appreciate sound, critical work, but, although in actual numbers its members may be as great as ever, they form a smaller proportion of the reading public as a whole than used to be the case, a much smaller proportion in America than in almost any European country as is indicated by statistics of comparative pay for critics and of the circulation of genuinely critical organs of opinion. The saving remnant does not always save. The rising flood of mass circulation is engulfing one great daily, one might almost say "chains" of dailies, after another. The fact that pay for critical work is lower in proportion now than twenty years ago and lower than in England does not indicate that the saving remnant is growing stronger. A man who works over a book review with the same meticulous regard for quality that he would over an article is aware that by doing so he is not only making a financial sacrifice which in most cases he cannot afford but that, from the casual and incidental nature of the work, he is doing little to build up a reputation and secure for himself a commanding or lasting position in the world of letters. In Europe a man may choose between a considered article or a considered review, knowing either will bring him almost equal returns in money and repute. So long as the present tendency in America continues, and book reviewing is considered as a low-wage, third-rate job, I see little chance of developing an influential body of reviewers or critics, and until such a body emerges I see equally little chance of establishing canons of literary or scholarly quality among our new public. An American will work himself to death, or mortgage his house, to pay the highest price he can or cannot afford for a car, an extra bathroom, the best clothes, the best food, but when it comes to literary criticism he plays on the cheap and is content with the third-rate, or the charity of hard-worked first-class men. Where your money is, there your heart is also.

To a great extent hitherto important daily papers are required, or think they are, to write down to ever lower levels of intelligence to meet the ever-widening circulation demanded by advertising and the cost of a modern newspaper plant. The saving remnant in our country of 120,000,000 is too small or too poor to support the best sort of journals on the comparative scale done by much smaller and poorer European countries. The problem which confronts the serious literary worker is, to what extent is he morally called upon to sacrifice his time and income to write, for such a public, the sort of book reviews that should be written? If he writes only an occasional review he acquires neither critical experience for himself nor authority with the public. If he reviews regularly and conscientiously, he is likely to go bankrupt. The temptation is to slide into doing easy "notices" or to give up the work altogether. But without sound reviewing, the reviewer, the authors reviewed, and the public are all likely to suffer. That is the plain situation.

James Truslow Adams, author of the foregoing article, is too well known to readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW *to need lengthy introduction. He is particularly fitted to discuss the present subject since his experience as a reviewer lies in England as well as America.*

The Boar and Shibboleth

By EDWARD DORO

I WAS eleven, hardly more,
When first I saw a crystal boar,
Stretched on the ground in self-admiring fettle,
With purple eyes and snout of golden metal—
Polished by digging roots—and bones of coral.
Looking, I deemed he was a thing immoral,
Something a boy should never see.
I turned and ran, precipitously.

A little way, a little way;
Then my feet would not obey.
The heavy hammers of my memory sang on;
They beat the anvil of my mind, and rang on.
My thoughts, hot, hissing sparks, were defying
My better will. In flat tones they kept crying,
"Go, go again, return pellmell
To that fantastic animal!"

The boar lay on that very place,
Curled in sleep with bestial grace.
When I came up, I whistled, and he started,
Shaking himself. A noonday nimbus darted
Around his head with tiny beads of glowing,
And I drew back in sudden shyness, knowing
That I was merely human, and
Could never wholly understand.

He nosed his snout in my palm,
Making me comforted and calm
Because I found him for a friendly creature.
Intent, I looked upon his every feature:
The golden mane, the purple tusks, the crest
Of wiry hair upon the haunch, the chest
Covered with silken purple thread,
The golden cross upon his head,
The hooves of lapis lazuli.
Lifting his head, he stared at me
And whined. The cry came like a meteor dropping
With a soft music, never, never stopping.
Lightly, I sprung upon his back a-straddle,
His spiral tusks for rein and hide for saddle.
I laughed. He answered me in style,
And off we scampered, mile on mile,

Until we found a sunny field
Where I dismounted. The boar heeled
On the corn-red ground and whined in greeting.
I turned about. There stood a maiden beating
Her hands together, overcome with pleasure.
"Stop here awhile, if you have time and leisure,"
She called; "The boar, the boar you ride,
May I have him, to grace my side?"
"What is your name?" I questioned her.
Her voice came with a gentle whirr.
"They call me Shibboleth." "And what its meaning?"
"An ear of corn, I think, in time of gleaning.
But you, why do you ride? are you in danger?
Tell me your reason in this country, stranger."
Speech would not come. I was possessed,
Watching the light play on her breast.

Can I describe the maiden well—
In other words, a miracle?
Slowly I left her; and my blood was pounding
With a queer rhythm; and her voice was sounding
Full in my eardrums; and the field of corn
That lay behind was, in the wind, a horn
That delicately mimicked her
With a voice of gentle whirr.

To home and family I went,
Nervous with my wonderment.
When I confided of the boar that glittered,
The elder people smiled, my sister tittered,
And all my brothers held me in derision.
Their disbelief cut raw, like an incision,
In the revelation of my youth,
Which, I am sure, was gospel truth.

When they received my tale that way,
I made a vow never to say
Or breathe the slightest word of my adventure
With that maiden, though the vision meant sure
That I was thrown for ever in a riot
Of gold and purple thoughts. I wait in quiet.
Sometimes I say beneath my breath
The lovely name of Shibboleth.

John Mistletoe, XXV.

(*Continued from page* 581)

to the corned beef and cabbage of Dooner's. But wherever they lunched they managed to get a few minutes for looking over the books at Leary's.

Mistletoe liked to hope that something of Tom Daly's Celtic genius might linger in the pigeonholes of that old desk. At any rate he was faithful to it, after his fashion. Some of his clearest memories of it are the summer evenings when his family were at the seashore and he sat alone in the dark office, wearing down the point of a pen on schemes of his own. Upstairs in the departments of the morning paper all was blaze and activity, but the afternoon quarters were eerily silent. Hours would go by in that warm enchanted corner, lit only by a green drop-light. Sometimes there was the peaceful companionship of good Charley Sykes, grimly scowling and stretching a lean knotty hand over tomorrow's cartoon, but always there was that strange sense of complete quiet on the edge of uproar. Presently the hum of presses would begin down in the basement, and he would consider dolefully that the men upstairs had covered the news of the whole world while the tyro in his shadowy corner might only have written two or three stanzas. On his way home to a dolefully empty apartment he would read the early edition with coffee and doughnuts.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

WITTER BYNNER has edited the SONNETS OF FREDERICK GODDARD TUCKERMAN, with an introduction that places Tuckerman high in American poetry. Alfred Knopf has made a very pleasing book of the poems, the price of which is $2.50.

Tuckerman, it seems, published only one book. Ticknor and Fields of Boston brought it out and it ran into three editions. This was in the 'sixties. Tennyson saw the English edition and evinced decided interest. So did Emerson and Longfellow in America. But Bynner thinks that Tuckerman's really great work has so far escaped every anthologist. It seems that twenty-two years ago Walter Prichard Eaton, the dramatic critic, discovered Tuckerman and wrote about him in *The Forum*, quoting six of his sonnets.

We discover from Mr. Bynner's book that Tuckerman was born and brought up in Boston, went to Harvard but was forced to discontinue there on account of eye-trouble, settled in Greenfield, Massachusetts in 1847 and lived chiefly there till his death in 1873. During a visit to England he stayed four or five days with Tennyson who gave him, on parting, the original manuscript of "Locksley Hall." Tennyson corresponded with him, as did Emerson and Longfellow.

Tuckerman's sonnets are irregular in form. Bynner contends that he knew what he was doing in each studied irregularity. That the irregularities *were* studied, we do not doubt. But in this sifting of the best of his work they do not seem to us always successful. However, there are enough striking lines and phrases, there is enough evidence of acute observation of his surroundings and of his feeling for words in their sound, in their connotations, in their very shape and form to bespeak the true poet and make us glad that Mr. Bynner has brought him to our attention. The editor finds in the poetry of Tuckerman a Chinese quality, also, which we, not being the authority Mr. Bynner is upon the poetry of the Chinese, are not fitted to discuss. We wish to quote, however, two separate sonnets. The first for the remarkable idea embedded in it, the flare of imagination; the second for its close observation of nature. These two examples will, we hope, lead many to a perusal of the book Mr. Bynner has assembled. It is illustrated by two admirably reproduced and very lovely portraits of the poet and his wife.

As one turned round on some high mountain top
Views all things as they are, but out of place,
Reversing recognition, so I trace
Dimly those dreams of youth and love and stop
Blindly; for in such mood landmarks and ways
That we have trodden all our lives and know
We seem not to have known and cannot guess:
Like one who told his footsteps over to me
In the opposite world and where he wandered through
Whilst the hot wind blew from the sultry north—
Forests that give no shade and bottomless
Sands where the plummet sinks as in the sea,
Saw the sky struck by lightning from the earth,
Rain salt like blood, and flights of fiery snow.

Hast thou seen reversed the prophet's miracle—
The worm that, touched, a twig-like semblance takes?
Or hast thou mused what giveth the craft that makes
The twirling spider at once invisible,
And the spermal odor of the barberry flower,
Or heard the singing sand by the cold coast foam,
Or late—in inland autumn groves afar—
Hast thou ever plucked the little chick-wintergreen star
And tasted the sour of its leaf? Then come
With me betimes, and I will show thee more
Than these, of nature's secrecies the least:
In the first morning, overcast and chill,
And in the day's young sunshine, seeking still
For earliest flowers and gathering to the east.

Another recent Knopf publication is "NAKED HEEL," new poems from Leonora Speyer, lately a winner of the Pulitzer Prize. She tells us that she has also included from her first book, "A Canopic Jar," four other poems. One of them, "The Ladder," we have never much cared for. It is well wrought, it is dramatic, but it has always seemed to us that there was a touch too much of the sensational to it, in the conclusion. This is distinctly not true of two other creations dealing with love in Mrs. Speyer's newest book. The one, narrative called "Monk and Lady" is excellently executed. The touches of irony throughout are all in place and all effective. And the concluding lines of the last sonnet in Mrs. Speyer's sonnet sequence are again excellent. The quietness of the statement throughout is just what was needed to intensify the irony. In other poems this poet wields a flexible irregularity of line that can curve like a wave or snap like a whip. In regular metres she shows a careful choice of words, and all her poems are—as indeed they should be—musical to the ear. The "Ballad of Old Doc Higgins" shows a delightful sense of humor. Again, the poet can stir our emotions. The ending of the poem on "Swans" is extremely fortunate. The sight of swans on a still water has always drawn poets to write of them. In view of the deal they have already written it is matter for praise that Mrs. Speyer has been so successful in this particular poem. The introductory poem, and dedicatory, to the poet's mother is moving in its sincerity.

This is beautiful, from "Prelude":

Always I shall remember how you suddenly said,
"What is that? What is that?"—as a light,
Lurking and lambent and white beyond whiteness,
Flamed in the autumn wood;
And we stood, quiet lover and lover,
Watching the moon, like a river,
Flood over and into the night.

One relishes such simplicity in the midst of a great deal of tortuous work of the day. Evidence of Mrs. Speyer's craftsmanship is that only very rarely do her rhymes seem not part of the inevitable progress of her sentences. On the whole, save for several single poems from other books that we remember, we should call this her best volume. Her observation of humanity is subtle, the significant incidents that she chooses, the themes that she takes, the natural descriptions seem for the most part spontaneously the growth of her own life. A variety of observation is here. Occasionally there is a trace of sentimentality, which is practically the only stricture we should bring against this accomplished work. We should place the work no higher than that of several women poets now writing, but it bears the stamp of individuality. As an artist Mrs. Speyer does not rank, for instance with Miss Millay. She has not equalled, in our opinion, certain work by Miss Bogan and Miss Leonie Adams. But her own contribution to the poetry of the day is distinctly praiseworthy.

The John P. Morton Company of Louisville, Kentucky, has published in a new edition a book of poems that originally appeared in 1913, "THE FLAME IN THE WIND," by Margaret Steele Anderson, with a foreword by George Madden Martin. Miss Anderson was Celtic by inheritance, and a graduate of Wellesley. Her poems appeared in several magazines some twenty years ago. One poem, "The Breaking," attracted a good deal of attention at the time. With the best intentions, Miss Martin, makes a peculiar mistake in her present foreword in speaking of the lines beginning "They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead," as written by Louise Imogen Guiney when they should actually be attributed to William Johnson Cory, but they should remain in their place as a tribute to Miss Anderson. This poet could write lines that haunt, as in her refrain "Not this word, oh, not this!" A good deal of her work dates from a time when American poetry was just beginning to demand of its practitioners more craftsmanship than Miss Anderson often evinces. She sang spontaneously but she let the emotional quality of her verse run away with the technical skill that only will impart the emotion effectively.

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Books of Special Interest

Russian Icons De Luxe

MASTERPIECES OF RUSSIAN PAINTING—Twenty Color Plates and Forty-three Monochrome Reproductions of Russian Icons and Frescoes from the XIth to the XVIIIth Centuries. London: Europa Publications, Ltd. 1931.

Reviewed by CHRISTIAN BRINTON

IT seems that a new artistic discovery—the Russian icon — is delighting our dilettante. Apropos of which, nothing has puzzled, not to say perturbed, the outside world more than the attention devoted in the Russia of today to art, literature, and general cultural considerations. In point of fact, that wave of romantic Slavophilism which swept the country during the early and middle decades of the last century cannot be compared either in volume or in tensity with the grandiose and avowedly realistic educational programme inaugurated by the U. S. S. R. Also, it is important to note that the high-pressure mobilization of mass intelligence which looks toward future progress and development, has been paralleled by a singularly able and scholarly exposition of past achievement, notably in the fields of art and archæology. The remarkable work of Professor Koslov and his field staff in Mongolia and the Gobi Desert has received due recognition in the foreign press. Yet it has remained for a less known group of experts attached to the National Central Restoration Workshops in Moscow to produce results of equal, if not greater, significance in the province of Russian painting.

Beginning before the October Revolution, and continuing their labors down to the present day, such men as Professor A. I. Anisimov, Professor Igor Grabar, Mr. P. I. Yukin, Mr. G. O. Chirikov, and others have, with incredible patience and dexterity, disclosed the hitherto detached and defaced outlines of a truly national esthetic physiognomy. It is the results of their united efforts, extending over the span of a dozen lean, precarious years, which are epitomized in the display of Russian icons now being seen in this country, and in the publication herewith issued in connection with the exhibition.

The roster of English works devoted to Russian iconic art is pitifully slender. Aside from occasional articles we have thus far possessed only Professor N. P. Kondakov's "The Russian Icon," so efficiently translated and edited by Professor Ellis H. Minns of Cambridge. Beyond this, nothing to initiate the English-reading student into a mystic, hieratic realm of visual imagery which reaches back to the eleventh century and stretches in virtually unbroken sequence to the threshold of the nineteenth. For not only is Russian iconic painting one of the most typically national and unadulterated, it is also one of the longest continued schools of art of which there is existing record.

Finding its origins in the rude encaustic likenesses painted on the burial shrouds of the ancient Egyptians, and spreading fanlike throughout Syria, Greece, Byzantium, the Southern Slav states, and also Italy, the icon attained perfect flowering upon the wide-sweeping, heavily wooded expanse of "Holy Russia." The destiny of any art is, in the first, and last, analysis dictated by considerations social and material. And thus, without ardent religious feeling, consummate craftsmanship, and that profusion of available panel wood so characteristic of Russia, the icon could never have reached full development. The great, glowing iconostases, far excelling anything in the Near Eastern churches even, as likewise the most brilliant of those glowing little portable icons or "prayer pictures," were painted upon wood. So intimately was the icon associated with wood that its devotees were in fact sneeringly referred to by the impious as "wood worshippers."

The current publication is the joint work of four well known art authorities. Reflecting the English, and eminently West European, point of view are essays by Sir Martin Conway and Mr. Roger Fry. Incorporating the latest results of expert Russian research and connoisseurship are brief papers by Professor Anisimov and Professor Grabar, the actual notes upon the illustration having been compiled by Mr. Y. A. Olsufiev and Mr. M. S. Lagovsky. It would be manifestly unfair to compare the sincere, if somewhat ingenuous, contributions of Sir Martin and Mr. Fry with the luminous, penetrating exposition of Professor Anisimov. Here, in brief, is one who moves with delicate precision, almost prevision, in a largely uncharted region. No purely European scholar could hope to evince, in the complex province of Russian religious painting, that instinctive capacity for "seeing through" which is the gift of the soft-voiced, mild-mannered man who daily trudges from his home to the little side door of the Moscow Historical Museum, or across the shining river to the Restoration Workshops. One can but be grateful that Professor Anisimov's writings are at last reaching the Anglo-Saxon public.

Cooper the Observer

GLEANINGS IN EUROPE. Volume Two. England. By JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. Edited by ROBERT E. SPILLER. New York: Oxford University Press. 1930. $3.50.

NEW YORK. By JAMES FENIMORE COOPER. New York: William Farquhar Payson. 1930.

Reviewed by FRED LEWIS PATTEE

THE publication of this second volume of Cooper's "Gleanings" is again a major event in the history of our early literature, and the hint in Doctor Spiller's introduction that the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation has become interested in the republication of all of Cooper's miscellaneous writings is of more than passing interest. Cooper's books that lie in their first obscure editions after nearly a hundred years since their original issue number six or eight. The "Gleanings" alone amount to five large volumes. That they never have received the publicity they deserve is a part of the man's peculiar history. The most honest and patriotic of men, with a pen that told the truth as he saw it, cut where it might, he lived his later years in a storm of bitterness that not only kept him in a perpetual rage but made it impossible for him to receive from his countrymen anything like the recognition his work deserved. These volumes were never reprinted because they were considered by Americans as Mencken-like outbursts of vituperation. And America in the '30s was not ready for a Mencken however brilliant his pen.

But read today, the "Gleanings" reveal nothing that seems to us like deliberate vituperation or unreasonable bitterness. They are the work of an honest observer in England, one who had peculiar advantages for observation of the men and manners of early Victorian England, and who worked with a camera-like realism. Everywhere flashlights upon men and manners and scenery. It is as full of wise generalization upon all matters British as is Emerson's "English Traits." In page after page Cooper recounts his observations, his opinions, his anecdotes of men like Scott and Rogers and Coleridge and Wordsworth, of all of whom he saw much. He was entertained often at Holland House when it was in its most brilliant period, and he reproduces with the pen of a novelist occasion after occasion with transcriptions of repartee, and flashlights upon costumes and manners. The temptation to quote at length from this richness is great, but my space is limited. A few chapter titles will show what the reader has in store: "Godwin and Rogers," "Holland House," "Earl Grey and His Party," "The House of Lords," "Scott and Coleridge," "Aristocracy," "The Press," "A Poetical Morning," "Truckling America."

The volume belongs on the shelf that holds Emerson's "English Traits" and Hawthorne's "Our Old Home." In editing it Dr. Spiller has done excellent work. His introduction is a model of its kind: everything necessary, nothing too much.

Still another Cooper reprint enriches the current book lists in "New York," a most distinctive little volume for collectors made of the recently discovered introductory chapter of a work partly finished by Cooper during the last months of his life. The title of the volume was to be "The Towns of Manhattan," but the partially completed manuscript perished in a fire that consumed the printing office and the work was abandoned. One copy, however, of the introductory chapter, a proof sheet that had been sent out to a reader, survived the flames, and it is this fragment of sixty-three book pages with introduction and illustrations that makes possible the present volume.

Cooper's object as he sets it forth was "not so much to dilate on existing facts, as to offer a general picture, including the past, the present, and the future, that may aid the mind in forming something like a just estimate of the real importance and probable destination of this emporium of the New World." The chapter in itself is a valuable addition to that mass of Cooper material now collecting that is bound to result in a reconsideration of the man's place in the literary history of his time. It is fearless in its criticism, cogent, illuminating. Perhaps the essayist Cooper, the philosophic observer, may in time be placed alongside even the Cooper of the American romances.

NOTE: This advertisement appeared in THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE on January 17. Its invitation was accepted by a gratifying number of readers, but our Stock Room reports a few copies still on hand.

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As these lines are written, the stock-room reports an inventory of six hundred and thirty-eight copies of a book by HENRY BAERLEIN bearing the title *Dreamy Rivers*. Only a thousand copies had been imported from England, for here was a book difficult to classify, impossible to chart—obviously aimed only at the elect, the blessed, the fancy-free. Let the librarians beware: this mixture of high gipsy imaginings and indiscreet memorabilia from the last seacoast of Bohemia cannot be card-indexed. It is part novel, part essay, part traveller's tale richly hued with the Romany strain.

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The book is just beginning to be discovered. "In sober real countries like England," writes CLEMENCE DANE in the *London Book Society News*, "chamber-maids don't abandon their work on the spur of the moment to go on a walking tour with a casual guest; the coming of a tourist is not an event; bishops and mayors don't offer him lifts; and poets and beautiful women do not attach themselves to him as a matter of course. But all of these things happen in this wonderland of Europe. *Dreamy Rivers* is a delicious book."

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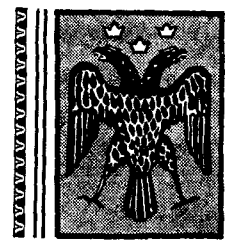

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News Out of Scotland

By George Blake

IT seems quite possible that within the next few years the British Government, sorely perplexed already by imperial problems in India and South Africa and Palestine, will have to face at least a devolutionary demand from a closer and, at the first thought, highly improbable quarter. No doubt it will amuse the world to learn that Scotland, whose sons have done not too badly out of the Empire, is in the mood to demand her independence back again, but the Scottish movement in that direction is at this moment much more purposeful than the world can possibly realize. We have in Scotland a National Party with an ever-increasing membership. We have our Clann Albainn, of which the secretive members are sworn to use violence for the Cause if need be. We even have (our crowning glory) Mr. Compton Mackenzie. The author of "Sinister Street" has deserted the Channel Islands and lairds it over an insular domain near Inverness, studies Gaelic, wears the kilt with quite a Stuart air, and orates persistently and persuasively in demand of Scottish independence. This new movement has indeed its comic aspects; but so had that which turned Ireland into a Free State; and as in Ireland, it has its literary counterpart—may, in fact, be said to be primarily a literary enterprise. The most able exponents of Scottish Nationalism are creative writers, and every creative Scottish writer under forty is a Nationalist, if not always in the party sense. So vast, so uncritical, is young Scotland's enthusiasm for the cause, there are scores who talk in terms of a "Scots Renaissance."

It would be the simplest thing in the world to demonstrate that the constant use of this windy phrase arises out of a youthful confusion between promises and performance, but we can just as easily afford to take it as a sign of intellectual health and a pleasing token of high hopefulness. And it does certainly bespeak the fact that our younger writers are taking thought not only as to their own position but also as to the validity of the main traditions in Scottish letters, and as to the importance of the Caledonian gods—Scott, Burns, Stevenson, and the rest—judged according to absolute standards. It is in Scotland just now an age of discontent, revaluation, and revolt; and while it would be difficult to explain just how young Scotland has fallen into this temper, it is easy enough to suggest the spirit in which they are facing the putatively glorious future.

The first signs of this crepitation of interest in Scotland as Scotland manifested themselves immediately after the war. It was as if the young men came back from that experience with eyes not merely unclouded by traditional sentiment but actually focussed so as to see only the shadows that lie heavily on their native land. They looked at Scotland, and lo! the state of it was not good. The vast bulk of the population was huddled in the narrow industrial valley that lies between Glasgow and Edinburgh, while the Highlands were being rapidly depopulated. This urban population lived amid conditions of incredible squalor. At the same time, industrial prosperity was deserting Scotland and drifting southwards in response to the strong centrifugal pull of London's financial influence. The fine old tradition of craftsmanship—in the Clyde shipyards, for example—was in decay, going under before Trade Union rules and a vast invasion of cheap Irish labor. Then the Irish had brought a religious problem with them. And the true spirit of Scotland had been vulgarized by the Burns enthusiasts and patriots of the "Here's tae us, wha's like us" school. And the movies and the radio and state education were standardizing the thought of the people at the lowest of low levels.

In short, Scotland was in a mess; and while it was clearly realized that this sort of decline through intense industrialism was by no means peculiar to Scotland, the young men were baffled and infuriated by the fact that not a single writer of the older generation had written a word in protest against the forces that were undermining the integrity of the nation. They had been complacent, content to provide for the English and American markets novels that exhibited the Scot as either a quixotic Jacobite or a pawky delver in the Kailyard. Scott's torch of romance had been handed to Stevenson, and from Stevenson to Neil Monro and John Buchan. Roughly, the most popular and representative Scottish novels were those that told romantic tales of Jacobites, kilted clansmen, swordplay in the heather and, generally, successful adventures by land and sea in days gone by. On the other hand, the "Kailyard" group flourished a thought too luxuriantly. The humorous realism of John Galt prevailed in a highly dilute form in the prose works of Sir James Barrie, "Ian Maclaren," the Reverend S. R. Crockett, and a host of lesser men. In this sort of fiction, in response to the public's demand for pawkiness and pathos, Scotland was represented as a place where every prospect pleases and not even man is vile. And the young men knew that these Boys of the Old Brigade, skilful literary artists as many of them were, had falsified the issue, sold the pass, and produced nothing but a literature of escape to represent Scotland to the world. Only George Douglas Brown had faced reality when he produced "The House with the Green Shutters"; and his revolt was really an early rumbling of the revolution that is almost an accomplished fact today.

The names and works of the leading revolutionaries are not as yet familiar to the world at large. Prominent among them is Mr. C. M. Grieve, who, if his aims are occasionally obscure and his methods almost always unfortunate, has brought such terrific vitality and intense conviction to the task of revaluation that he can fairly be called the father of the movement. Grieve is in his own right one of the most distinguished of our poets, and his "To Circumjack Cencrastus," just published in Great Britain by *Blackwood's* over the penname of "Hugh McDiarmid," is a full, if occasionally obscure, statement of the case for a New Scotland. Lewis Spence, another poet of distinguished quality, has actually stood for Parliament in the interests of Scottish Nationalism. In another direction, the sanity and wit of George Malcolm Thomson—author of "Caledonia," "Scotland Rediscovered," and "A Short History of Scotland" (Kegan Paul)—have been of invaluable service in goading the complacent into frenzies of self-examination and in correcting the extravagances of the wild-eyed rebels. And, as an example of activity on more purely literary lines, there are Donald Carswell's cool, Stracheyesque studies of various Scots worthies, including even Sir Walter himself.

Work of this kind is not so much part of a true "Scots Renaissance" as a necessary preliminary to it, but even so, it is not too early to attempt some assessment of the creative products of the movement so far. What if they are little known outside Scotland? What if, in their desperate anxiety to show a sound balance sheet, the actuaries of the "Scots Renaissance" have had to count in the works of Norman Douglas and Compton Mackenzie?

The point is that the recent works of Scotsmen working consciously as Scotsmen have been of sufficient merit and interest to satisfy and excite Scotland. Inevitably, the poets have been the most prolific performers. "Holyrood," a recent anthology of contemporary Scottish verse, has quite impressive bulk. To compile a list of their names would be so much waste of space, but it is worth mentioning that women have been in the van of this particular wing of the movement, and that in one of them, Marion Angus, Scotland has found, at the least, her Housman. A collected edition of Miss Angus's poems is one of the hopes of the near future. For the rest, it is the tendency, rather than actual performances, that best indicates the quality of the modern Scottish group; for their swing is away from Burns and intimate, domestic verse and towards the freer realms so happily inhabited by those "makars" who flourished when Scotland was still a proud kingdom. Indeed, a complete edition of the poems of Dunbar represents the most sacred ideal of your modern Scot.

While it is probable that the fullest expression of thought and life in contemporary Scotland will come from some novelist still to be born, certainly still immature, the achievement of our younger novelists has been disappointing so far. Here, for one reason or another, we fumble and hesitate while our brothers and sisters, the poets, go ahead with banners flying. Perhaps it is more difficult to throw off the influence of Scott and Galt and Stevenson than it is to forget Burns. There was a small post-war crop of realism as applied to the theme of Clydeside industrialism, but it harvested poorly and has not been sown since with any confidence. A quite remarkable group of women hailing from Aberdeen—Agnes Mure Mackenzie, Nan Sheppard, and the rest—have staked a claim over a rich enough, but terribly narrow, vein of sombre romance. (It is worth mentioning, by the way, that "Gallow's Orchard," at least a *succès d'estime* in the States, was regarded

(Continued on page 589)

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Art

TAOS PUEBLO. Photographed by ANSEL EASTON ADAMS and described by MARY AUSTIN. San Francisco: Grabhorn Press. 1930. $75.

For centuries the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and the Hopi of Arizona have unconsciously contributed to the world of art. Much of their product, however, especially in the form of pottery, has been hidden in the soil until retrieved by archæologists. It is now being realized that the arts and culture of these Indians are entitled to be presented in a style as beautiful and as worthy as the remarkable things which they have made and which grace so many of our museums.

A veritable library has been published on the Pueblo tribes, and the end is by no means in sight; but it has not been until recently that books as fine as the culture of which they treat have made their appearance.

Only within the last fortnight has been issued Volume XVII of Edward S. Curtis's North American Indian, that sumptuous work in twenty volumes and as many portfolios of plates, prepared and published under the patronage of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan and his late father. The volume mentioned (which bears the date of 1926) is the third of the series to treat of the Pueblos.

There now comes from the Grabhorn Press of San Francisco the splendid folio work on the Pueblo of Taos, published by Ansel Easton Adams, who made the twelve photographs with which it is illustrated and which are preceded by an elucidative text from the pen of no other than Mary Austin, who for years has been a student of and writer on Pueblo topics, as everyone knows.

As a piece of bookmaking the work leaves nothing to be desired. If the committee of selection of the fifty best printed books of 1930 does not include it in its list, somebody will have been guilty of oversight indeed. The plates are printed on the text paper, specially sensitized for the purpose; the hand-binding in Niger and linen is splendidly done by Hazel Dreis. The edition is limited to 108 copies, of which one hundred copies are to be sold at seventy-five dollars the copy. Yet many a piece of Pueblo potery only a generation or two old has commanded an even greater price, and in no case can one say that the cost has been exorbitant.

Belles Lettres

EAST OF THE HUDSON. By J. BROOKS ATKINSON. Knopf. 1931.

In this book, Mr. Atkinson has brought together a number of essays upon New York City and the country near it. Some of them are autobiographical, dealing with the days before Greenwich Village was taken up and abandoned by curiosity hunters or with vanished theatres; and the consistent use of the past tense, even in such surprising contexts as "He (Joe Cook) was one of the great comic spirits," gives to the whole book an almost melancholy air of reminiscence, and a faint impression of being intended for posterity.

It is this, perhaps, that gives a feeling of disappointment with those parts of the book that deal with the New York one knows, or with actors one has seen. Everything Mr. Atkinson says is accurate, his appreciation of the Marx brothers is as whole-hearted as anything could well be, his distinction between the merits of different comedians is nicely discriminating, and yet there is something wanting. It is enthusiasm, or at least emotion; one feels that Mr. Atkinson has caught everything except the uniqueness, the excitement, the challenge to love or hate it that is in New York, in its theatre and everywhere else. Mr. Atkinson's mood of gentle recollection would be quite right for London, but is somehow false for New York. The chapters about the New York that one does not know are interesting for their varied information, but in them, too, as in Herr Baedeker, one misses the beating of the heart.

Mr. Atkinson is much more successful in writing of the country. He has the misfortune, shared by many people at present, of being pulled by both the country and the town; his philosophy is not the pantheism that would allow him to find intellectual food in the country; indeed, he has a very low view of rustics generally, but his esthetic perceptions starve for it. So he writes of his week-ends up the Hudson, or of such morsels of the country as birds of passage in Central Park, or, most of all, of such unknown grounds as the Newark marshes, with the beauty of homesickness, which should appeal to the many others who can live neither in the city nor without it.

Poetry

NANTUCKET, MAUSHOPE, AND OTHER NEW ENGLAND POEMS. By *Don Holdeman-Jefferies*. Meador. $1.50.

ICELANDIC LYRICS. Selected and edited by *Richard Beck*. Reykjavik: Bjarnarson.

THE NATURAL YEAR. JANUARY. By *Frederick Edwards*. New York: White.

THE LEGEND OF OLD ST. AUGUSTINE. By *Burton H. Pugh*. Kansas City: Homerican Publishing Co.

Religion

THE BASIS OF BELIEF. By *William G. Ballantine*. Crowell. $2.

A FREE PULPIT IN ACTION. By *Clarence R. Skinner*. Macmillan. $2.50.

HUMANIST RELIGION. By *Curtis W. Reese*. Macmillan. $1.

PRAYERS. By *Francis Greenwood Peabody*. Houghton Mifflin. $1.50.

THE MIRROR OF THE MONTH. By *Sheila Kaye-Smith*. Harpers. $1.25.

Travel

GREEN FIELDS OF ENGLAND. By *Clare Cameron*. Smith. $3.50.

IN EGYPT. By *John C. Van Dyke*. Scribners. $2.50.

Books Briefly Described

BEST SHORT STORIES OF THE WAR. With an Introduction by H. M. TOMLINSON. New York: Harper & Bros. 1931. $3.50.

An anthology selected from German, French, English, and American sources, well calculated to arouse that sense of pity which, in his Introduction, Mr. Tomlinson says may be regarded as the guage of merit of war literature.

SPLENDOUR OF THE HEAVENS. Edited by T. E. R. PHILLIPS and W. H. STEAVENSON. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1931. $8.50 net.

A popular astronomy from the pens of a group of British astronomers and more useful to the British than to the American public since its numerous charts of the skies are prepared from the point of view of the observer in London. It is a comprehensive, if untechnical survey, and is illustrated with an immense number of charts and photographs.

SLAVE-TRADING IN THE OLD SOUTH. By FREDERICK BANCROFT. Baltimore: J. H. Furst Company. 1931. $4.

A study, based on original sources many of them journalistic, of slave-trading as it existed in the United States before the Civil War. It contains much interesting material presented with scholarly detachment. Numerous illustrations accompany the text.

DIGGING UP THE PAST. By C. LEONARD WOOLLEY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. $2.

A brief volume, based on a series of broadcasts by one of the leading British archaeologists, setting forth the means which the archaeologist adopts to achieve his purpose of illustrating and discovering the course of human civilization through scientific excavation. A concentrated but interesting exposition.

DARK HERITAGE. By SHIRLAND QUIN. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 19331. $2.50.

The well written story of a young Welshman who comes to American intending to stay for a short period but remains permanently.

FUGITIVE IN THE JUNGLE. By WILLIAM MATTENKLODT. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1931. $3 net.

An autobiographical chronicle, doubtless authentic, of a German who finds himself in South Africa at the outbreak of the war and enters upon a military career there with a company of his own. Its rather detailed and frequent accounts of military manœuvers are relieved by highly interesting descriptions of hunting expeditions and treks through the African wilderness.

HISTORY OF THE HEBREW PEOPLE. By GEORGE A. BARTO. New York: The Century Co. 1931. $3.50.

A convenient textbook history of the Hebrews which is elaborately illustrated by relevant passages from the Bible.

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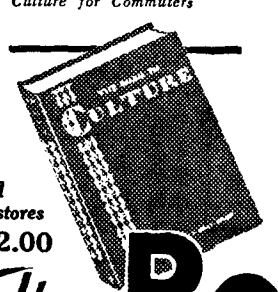

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News Out of Scotland

(*Continued from preceding* 586)

in Scotland as a spurious product.) And the work of Neil M. Gunn—whose "Morning Tide" is our Book Society's choice for January and will appear in due course in the States under the auspices of Harcourt, Brace—has a fineness and an individuality which, at the very least, suggest that one man has hit a trail along which a new Scottish fiction can healthily develop. Admittedly, we have not so far much to boast of in the way of novels, but it is just in this direction that the most desperate efforts are being made and in this direction that the best work of our "Renaissance" will eventually be done. What Scotland needs above all is a novelist of manners: a Bennett or Galsworthy of the Lowlands. We shall want better than that in the long run, of course, but it is tillers of a rich and virgin soil that are required just now to prepare the way for our putative Tolstoy.

The whole movement follows the historical lines. Grieve, Thompson, Carswell, and others are blazing the trail on the lines I have indicated. There are working beside them several historians, whose self-imposed function is to examine Scotland's past in the light of modern scholarship. Thus Dr. George Pratt Insh has very usefully examined those last pathetic efforts of Scottish imperialism—the Darien Scheme and so forth. The Jacobite adventure is being continually and more and more fully documented. The status of Robert the Bruce has been effectively reduced from that of national hero to that of Norman adventurer. Research along all sorts of unlikely lines is being doggedly pursued in the same spirit. Thus Miss Marion McNeil has shown in "The Scots Kitchen" that the nation could once upon a time boast of a highly individual and distinguished *cuisine*. Miss McNeill is even now at work on "Scottish Festivals," a book that will tell us, in a most entertaining fashion no doubt, all that is to be known about Hallowe'en and Hogmanay and Beltane.

Cependant, ça marche. . . . Scotland is busy about itself; and if the results are not interesting, it will not be for want of enthusiasm and hard work. One particularly significant sign of the times is the recent establishment of the Porpoise Press, which is pledged to confine itself to the production of books of Scottish interest and to manufacture these books in Scotland and with Scottish labor. This is the inevitable response to the almost unanimous demand of young Scotland, which has wearied at length of the English publishers' whim about "local interest" and is determined to go its own way. How far it will go may be one of the most interesting literary spectacles of the next few decades.

The second volume of the collected letters of the late Rainer Maria Rilke have recently appeared in Germany under the title, "Briefe Rainer Maria Rilkes aus den Jahren 1906-1907" (Leipzig: Insel). Many of the letters are chronicles of the small happenings of daily life, but they are interesting when even at their most unimportant as a revelation of the personality of the author. A large part of the correspondence deals with Rilke's friendship with the artist, Cézanne.

A correspondent to the *Herald Tribune* writing of the newly discovered fresco of Dante in Pistoia says:

"The importance of the portrait at Pistoia derives from the fact that it appears to be the earliest yet brought to light which is definitely labeled. The authenticity of the fresco portrait of the poet in the Chapel of the Bargello, Florence, which is attributed to Giotto, is now doubted by many critics. The records appear to indicate that Giotto, who was a contemporary and close friend of Dante, did leave a portrait of the poet in the Bargello, but recent research says the place was not the wall of the chapel. Other portraits which are identified date from the first part of the century after Giotto's death.

Senator Alessandri Chiappelli, who has done many years art research in Italy, is responsible for the opinion that the fresco at Pistoia was placed there shortly after the middle of the fourteenth century. He bases this judgment on the style of the artist."

The *Manchester Guardian*, writing of the French novelist, "Willy," who died recently, says: Although he has died at no overly great age, 'Willy' had survived his reputation, and belonged to the past. He was a typical boulevardier of that brilliant century. Witty and almost erudite . . . but also somewhat superficial, his quarrelsome disposition made him many enemies, and led him to fight many duels."

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The Reader's Guide

By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*

L. H. C., Staunton, Va., asks for books on the history and evolution of the observance of Lent, particularly in the Anglican and American churches.

THE best I could find was in the article in the latest Britannica, "Lent," most of the many sermons printed on the subject being meant for aids to devotion rather than historical surveys. Referring the matter to the Librarian of Union Theological Seminary, Mr. W. W. Rockwell agreed that this was the best encyclopedia hint. He added that the history of Lent in the early period may be found in the "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," by William Smith and Henry Wace, published some fifty years ago and still good, also in the article in the French "Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie," under "Carême." The only books on the subject are by Roman Catholics: "Lent and Holy Week," by Herbert Thurston, S. J. (Longmans, Green) and "Heortology: a History of the Christian Festivals from Their Origin to the Present Day," by Dr. K. A. Heinrich Kellner, Professor of Catholic Theology in the University of Bonn (Kegan Paul).

J. F. M., London, says that "one of the bees in my bonnet is wrath with the way in which Switzerland's best work in art and letters is either ignored or credited to France or Germany. I wonder how many people realize that Rousseau was a Swiss, not a Frenchman? Even the Encyclopedia Britannica described Gottfried Keller as a Gernman novelist, though—thank goodness—this and other Swiss defects have been rectified in the new edition. This is why I venture to point out that Keller's charming collection of tales, which can hardly be overpraised, is the "people of Seldwyla," not of Selwylda, as the *Saturday Review* prints it. A mistake of this kind could hardly be made in the title of a French or German classic; why should poor little Switzerland be treated so carelessly?" Oh, couldn't it just? I have yet to find the mistake in any language that could not be made in a composing room. As for a French composing room, someday a French compositor will spell an American writer's name quite right and perish from shock.

NAMES have begun to come in for the New England lakeside lodge of *M. R. P., Detroit*. It so tickled the fancy of *E. B. G. A., Albuquerque*, for a resident of New Mexico to get the chance of suggesting to a man in Michigan a name for his lodge in Maine, that she sent in "Long-Last-Lodge," adding that L.L.L. would look well on the china. But she hopes that M. R. P. will "accept your charming suggestion of 'Hetherward.'" *E. T. L., New York*, says that "Bird House" served for a lifetime to identify the Massachusetts cottage from which her family took wing. *M. B., Ofelika, Alabama*, says that there are two lovely names in Kipling's "The Feet of the Young Men"

> *The Young men's feet are turning*
> *To the camps of* proved desire *and*
> known delight

and that his "Four-way Lodge" is attractive, if it suits this building. So is "Poco Pensieri," old Italian for "little care," and Lancelot's "Joyeuse Garde." "If the lake is beautifully clear, the Indian Catawissa—clear water—might suit, or O-kee-cho—all hail. If there is an extensive waterscape, the Greek Thalassa is expressive. My place was granted by the government to an old chief, so all the names, Lake Shohola, the brooks, and the mountains are Indian, one mountain bearing the name of the chief himself."

L. R., Sidney, Ohio, needs at least one book on how to write for the magazines.

THE latest are "Magazine Article Writing," by Ernest Brennecke, Jr. and Donald Clark (Macmillan), and "Writing for Profit," by Donald Wilhelm (McGraw-Hill), both published recently. The first deals with every sort of article, features, "confessions," interviews, book reviews, and essays; by plain, direct, and practical chunks of advice it helps a beginner from gathering material to marketing the finished product, and the brief book lists are made up of helpful working material for a writer's desk library. Mr. Wilhelm's book begins with a chapter on newspaper work such as I wish someone had written for me when I was plunging into journalism at eighteen on a small town opposition daily. But then, the veterans on that paper, with the matter-of-fact benevolence of their tribe, taught me such rudiments of my trade as I ever mastered, without any textbook at all. From this section "Writing for Profit" runs into magazine articles, interviewing, publicity, advertising, and radio writing; it even deals with fiction, to my mind far less usefully—but then I seldom enjoy professional advice on the trade of fiction. A feature is inclusion of advice by famous writers and editors, scattered freely through the book; here is a famous set of suggestions for writers of special articles sent out by the late Dr. E. E. Slosson of *Science Service*, which would as much improve papers for women's clubs as it has bettered everyday articles on popular science.

E. C. D., Hinsdale, Ill., asks, on behalf of a teacher, for reading material that would stimulate interest in her two particularly dogmatic subjects, spelling and arithmetic.

FOR the first subject I have had an answer ready and waiting since just before Christmas, when a copy of the pamphlet "Learning to Spell: an Informal Guide for College Students," by Julia Norton McCorkle (Heath), drifted to my desk and made some sensation, first by its subtitle, then by its courageous tackling of the notion that spelling is a gift of God withheld or bestowed without human collaboration. Spelling well or ill in the 'teens is largely a matter of pride; thus spurred, the young person forces himself into training, and this little book provides him with technique and material for it.

"Practical Mathematics for Home Study," by C. I. Palmer (McGraw-Hill), is a one volume edition of the same author's "Practical Mathematics" in four: it covers arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, with special reference to use in self-instruction. "Shop Mathematics," by Norris and Smith (McGraw-Hill), is a standard textbook teaching fundamental principles for use in shop courses and continuation schools; "Business Arithmetic," by Sutton and Lennes (Allyn), a similar work for business schools. My connection with the anti-mathematics movement being too well known for my recommendation to do these books any good, they have been chosen on the advice of better authorities. I would welcome further suggestions on books for this purpose; possibly arithmetic could be brightened as Latin grammar was by the famous "Comic Latin Grammar" of Percival Leigh of *Punch*, with John Leech's illustrations—a work just reprinted with all its original pictures and eccentricities, by Edwin Valentine Mitchell and Dodd, Mead. Similar attention has just been paid to English history in a work called "1066 and All That," by W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman (Methuen) by whose bestowal a British correspondent has just tried to improve my mind: it is "the only memorable history of England, because all the history that you can remember is in this book." Here one may read of Richard I who, "whenever he returned to England, always set out again immediately for the Mediterranean and was therefore known as Richard Gare de Lyon," and of the Edward who said *Honi soie qui mal y pense* ("Honey, your silk stocking's hanging down") and "gave his ill-mannered courtiers the Order of the Bath—an extreme form of torture in the Middle Ages." Not that this has anything to do with arithmetic, but such a light-hearted book on it might help to lift the curse.

J. A. T., Oklahoma, asks who is Elspeth, author of "Strange Truth," published by Houghton Mifflin, saying: "I have an impression she is Dorothy Parker but have no announcement."

ELSPETH is really Mrs. Elspeth MacDuffie O'Halloran of Springfield, Mass. She has had a good deal of experience in publishing and bookselling and has recently gone into department store advertising; she is now living and working in Baltimore. Dale Warren of Houghton Mifflin says that the *New York Times* review of "Strange Truth" said that it was written by Dorothy Parker under a *nom de plume*, and that is where all the trouble started in the beginning.

L. B. C., Montrose, N. Y., a valued upholder of this column, is starting another Sabbatical in Europe in May and means to do all that good-will can to understand and admire the extraordinary new things to be seen while abroad in painting and sculpture. "We did go to a modern exhibition in Rome in 1925, but I should like this time to know more about it beforehand." They find Suzanne La Follette's "Art in America" very readable, "but simply cannot swallow some of the illustrations as portraits."

A NUMBER of readers may choke on some of the pictures in the following books, but for all that they will help this reader to realize the hope that "I can see the charm of modern paintings by the time I return. I love Italian Primitives—I wonder if people of their own day did so!" "The Modern Movement in Art," by R. H. Wilenski (Stokes), which explains what the new schools are trying to do, with illustrations at every point and comparisons with old masters, makes a valuable work. "The Meaning of Art," by A. P. McMahon (Norton), is another for this list, and Walter Pach's "Masters of Modern Art" (Viking), and the provocative volume on "Modern American Painting," by Samuel M. Kootz (Brewer & Warren), with Oliver Saylor's "Revolt in the Arts" (Brentano). A group of four handbooks on "The Modern Arts" (Norton) come together in a box. For modernistic sculpture, the works of Stanley Casson, beautifully illustrated: "Some Modern Sculptors" (Oxford), and "Twentieth Century Sculpture" (Oxford). By no means omit "The Frescoes of Diego Ribera," with an introduction by Ernestine Evans, published in a big book by Harcourt, Brace; another illuminating work on Mexican art in general is Anita Brenner's "Idols Behind Altars" (Brewer & Warren). To these I would add, for there is no separating them from this consideration, "Caricature of To-day," published by A. and C. Boni, and Frederick Kiesler's "Contemporary Art Applied to the Store and Its Display" (Brentano), the latter a large picture book of the extreme modernistic movement. Applied to room decoration, this seems to combine the best features of a shop window, a bathroom, and a safety-deposit vault.

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Points of View

Information Wanted

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

I wonder if you could possibly offer any suggestions as to how I could find a "lost" story. It is rather an absurd quest, for none of us remembers either the author's name or the title of the tale, or even the date of publication. It came out at least six years ago, and we think it was seen in a volume belonging to a set of famous short stories —the sort of collection one finds in remote corners of the world. The volume in question was picked up in Siam.

The story is laid in China—Pekin, I think —presumably during the Boxer rising. A little group of people, of different nationalities, is besieged by the rebels. A rescuing party fights its way up to the very gates of the compound, only to be driven back. An old scientist, who has lived long years in China, knows full well what dreadful fate awaits them if captured by the Chinese, and feels the situation is hopeless. The ammunition is exhausted, the food supply very low, and the end seems inevitable. With mock gaiety he arranges a last dinner party, at which he poisons the wine. There is some difficulty in making one or two of the women drink, but finally he is successful. The rescuers break through, and arrive just as the last person is dying.

This is the story in briefest form. We have found various people who claim to have read it, but who cannot help us find it. I have tried the libraries here with no success.

If you could give me some clue, or some idea how to proceed in locating it (with such scant information), I should be most grateful.

We are not searching in idle curiosity, but with a definite object in view.

MRS. KERMIT ROOSEVELT.
New York City.

Some Confessions

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In the issue of December 27 Professor Northrop performs a useful service in showing the latent Platonism of the school of scientific philosophy he refers to; but in doing so introduces several confusions of his own. To be brief, I shall be somewhat bald:

1) Professor Northrop confuses the Aristotelian philosophy of nature with the atomic, and shows it by referring to the two as a single alternative to Platonism in Catholic philosophy. I grant that he does not make the confusion a clear one, for at the beginning he seems to distinguish three separate views. The two are of course quite distinct; Aristotle attacks atomism in well-known passages of the "Metaphysics"; Galileo had to struggle hard against the Peripatetics, and so did Gassendi.

2) Professor Northrop wrongly calls atomism (which by the by is not essential to scientific philosophy in general nor to modern scientific philosophy in particular) a philosophy of the visible. The atoms are ideal entities, by definition invisible, and are inferred from their visible effects, just as the entities which the Platonic current asserts. If the division must be a dichotomy, atomism belongs with Platonism rather than on the side of Aristotle. The connection is well known between Greek atomism and the Eleatics (Parmenides's Being; a less well known instance is Melissos's *kosmos*).

HENRY F. MINS, JR.
New York.

Catiline or Cataline?

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

A question in bibliography.

Henrik Ibsen's first youthful play was entitled "Catilina"; Ibsen made the fourth letter an *i*, as everybody does, and he naturally did not Anglicize or Gallicize by turning the Latin final *a* to an *e*. No complete English translation of the play has been made so far as I am informed; but in 1878 Mr. A. Johnstone published a translation of the first act with a summary of the other acts. In his title he legitimately Anglicized the name by using the final *e*, and he (or his printer?) eccentrically made the fourth letter an *a*, "Cataline."

Now the new "Britannica" gives "Cataline" as the English form of Ibsen's title, and others who depend on the "Britannica" begin to say that Ibsen's first play was "Cataline."

Is this the line standardization is going to take? When a Norwegian writes a play in the Danish language with correct spelling of the title, and the first English translation (incomplete at that) misspells the title contrary to universal English as well as international usage, does the misspelling thereby become the standard English form for use when one is referring to the original Danish work, "1850 saw the publication of his first play, 'Cataline'"? If the "Britannica" is the correct standard, and if somebody should now publish a complete translation of the play and spell Catiline's name right, would the "Britannica" thereby be changed from right to wrong? When we speak in English of a work in a foreign language, and elect to use the Anglicized form of the title, why should we not use the ordinary Anglicization of the word which constitutes the title and disregard any aberrant Anglicization which anybody else may have made, unless the aberrant form has become familiar to the general public?

STEVEN T. BYINGTON.
Ballard Vale, Mass.

Kin Hubbard

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In "Kin" Hubbard, who died the other day in Indianapolis after working since 1891 on the *News* of that city, America has lost one of her finest humorists. His delightful series of "Abe Martin's Sayings" deserved to be much more widely known. Only last summer E. V. Lucas, editing the first English appearance of "Abe Martin's Wisecracks," said, "Few are quite so terse and trenchant and amusing as Mr. Hubbard. He may not have any illusions, but he is profoundly understanding and always on the side of the angels. Furthermore, he makes you laugh." An example or two is in order:

"It's jest about got so a doctor a day is cheaper'n apples."

"Makin' a long stay short is a good aid t' popularity."

"'Woman's work is never done'—any more."

CYRIL CLEMENS.
Webster Groves, Mo.

Mrs. Opie

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

I am making a study of Mrs. Amelia Alderson Opie (1769-1853), novelist and poet, and wife of the artist John Opie. I am anxious to locate any manuscript material, particularly the letters, journals, and diaries of Mrs. Opie's which Miss Cecilia L. Brightwell used as a basis of her "Memorials" (1854); and the unpublished novel, "The Painter and his Wife." I wish also to find a copy of Mrs. Opie's "The Dangers of Coquetry," published anonymously in London in 1790. I am interested, too, in information concerning portraits of Mrs. Opie. I shall greatly appreciate any assistance which may come to me through your columns.

MARGARET ELIOT MACGREGOR.
2 Bedford Place, London, W. C. 1, Eng.

Josh Billings

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

I am writing a biography of Josh Billings [Henry Wheeler Shaw]. If any of your readers have letters or other information about the humorist will they please communicate with me? CYRIL CLEMENS.

A Failure of Memory

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

In Mr. Morley's preface to the Memorial Edition of Sherlock Holmes, he refers to an uncertainty on the part of Dr. Watson as to where he had been wounded—I believe that there is also some variance as to the good doctor's Christian name—, but more extraordinary by far:

Compare pages 38—41 of the "Cardboard Box" with pages 162—164 of the "Resident Patient." For three pages the two stories are identical. Henry Ward Beecher, war, etc. I suppose it is a case of a writer finding some old memoranda, and failing to remember that he had used the matter before. Three pages are reproduced verbatim.

If this has not been noticed, this information may be of interest.

CHARLES MASON.
Versailles, Ky.

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VICTOR HUGO. Notre Dame de Paris. Translated by JESSIE HAYNES, with a critical introduction by ANDREW LANG, and woodcut illustrations by FRANS MASEREL. Paris: Printed by R. Coulouma. 2 vols. 1930.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY. Confessions of an English Opium Eater. Introduction by WILLIAM BOLITHO and twelve lithographs by ZHENYA GAY. Printed at the Shakespeare Head Press. 1930.

HOMER. The Odyssey. Translated by ALEXANDER POPE. With an Introduction by CARL VAN DOREN. Printed by Enschende in Haarlem. 1931.

MOLIÈRE. Tartuffe, or The Hypocrite. Verse translation by CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE. Introduction by BRANDER MATTHEWS. Lithograph illustrations by H. STEINER-PRAG. Printed by Poeschel & Trepte in Leipzig. 1930.

THE second year of the Limited Editions Club is now well enough advanced so that some appraisal of the books issued in its foreign program can be given. It may be said at once that these volumes represent, on the whole, a more conservative attack on the problems than did the first twelve volumes. Whether they are more successful or more attractive depends somewhat upon one's liking, one's temperament,—or one's patriotism!

Without question, the most interesting of the four volumes before me is the "Opium Eater." It is a large quarto, very handsomely printed on English hand-made paper. The binding is in paper board sides and black cloth back, gold stamped. But what makes the book of peculiar interest is its type. It is the first use, so far as I have noted, of Mr. Rogers's Centaur type, recently cut in England for the monotype machine. And what a handsome type face it is! Despite the numerous handsome renaissance faces brought out in recent years, the Centaur has qualities of distinction which no type face has possessed since the famous letter designed for the Doves Press by Walker and Cobden-Sanderson. Whether it is better than that face one hesitates to say: but that it is a magnificent type will not be denied. Even its use in the Champfleury printed by Mr. Rogers for the Grolier Club did not bring out its beauties as does this book. And I feel sure that no large-sized letters have ever been designed which are so lovely. The title-page and headings of this book (and even more the similar pages of the forthcoming Clarendon Press Bible) cannot be equalled by any type face I know.

The lithographs, drawn on the stone, keep their place in a typographic setting by virtue of good proportions and suitable color. The book as a whole is an exceptionally successful piece of book making, an edition of the "Opium Eater" which must take high rank in modern publishing.

The "Odyssey" is a plain, straightforward piece of book printing, done in a good renaissance type face, and devoid of ornamentation, save for simple three-line initials. It is printed on good paper, but suffers from the error of protuberant deckle-edges. This edition must stand or fall on the Pope translation, for the use of which Mr. Van Doren has given excellent reasons in his introduction. On the whole it seems to me too cumbersome a format for a good reading edition.

Some of the strictures on the "Odyssey" might be applied to the format of "Tartuffe": the deckle-edges protrude (always a fault), and it is too big in size for a reading edition. But more than that, the type is ugly—a letter like those with which Didot bedevilled French printing. The lithographed illustrations are interesting. And the binding is excellent—cloth back strip, with printed title, and "bogus" paper board sides with a medallion of Molière embossed on the front cover.

Victor Hugo's "Notre Dame de Paris" is a good example of conventional French printing at its best. The Bodoni type, sufficiently leaded, makes a sparkling page, and the presswork is first class. The woodcuts by Frans Maserel are entirely adequate, and give style to the volume. The binding is the normal French affair, paper covers with glassine over-cover (brochée). The volumes are not of undue size to be read.

It should be noted that the Hugo contains Andrew Lang's introduction, the "Opium Eater," William Bolitho's, and the "Tartuffe," Page's translation and Brander Matthews's introduction; if not the last word in each case, at least these translations and introductions are by thoroughly competent hands, and really add something to the worth of the volumes.

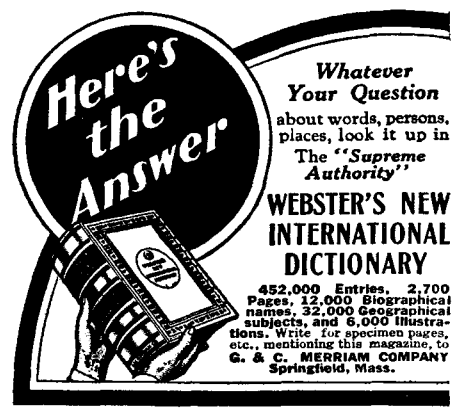
If any general criticism were to be levelled at these four volumes of the Limited Editions Club, it would be that they are unnecessarily large in size: they do make an imposing appearance. But they have so many virtues in themselves that mere bulk might be dispensed with. In this respect some of the volumes of the first series were pleasanter to handle. But as specimens of European printing they are not only excellent in themselves but interesting for comparison. And to have issued one volume so handsome as the "Opium Eater" is a triumph!

R.

Mr. Rudge's Spring List

With snow still on the ground it seems a bit early for a spring list, but that doesn't make this list of Mr. Rudge's any the less interesting. Among the more important items—my own selection as to "importance!"—are: Currier & Ives Print Series, No. 2, The Red Indian, with eight plates in full color; A History of the Society of Iconophiles of the City of New York, with many illustrations; and two new Thoreau issues.

R.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In the midst of the stampede for *Hard Lines*—and a good thing, too—your correspondents wish to remind All and Sundry that among the best-sellers of yesteryear are several titles that are still Going Strong.

The *Cross-Word Puzzle Books* are now up to *Series Eighteen*—selling better this year than the year before, and better last year than the year before—a depression-proof industry almost as stabilized as aspirin, telephones and cigarettes. . . . In their dollar-reprint editions, *The Story of Philosophy*, *Trader Horn*, *The Art of Thinking*, *Believe It Or Not*, and *Show Girl* are still Active Items on the Up and Up—known hereabouts as the Sales Manager's Delight or Babson's Last Stand. . . . And then there is that dateless classic, *Bambi*, *A Life In the Woods*—destined, apparently, to be a best-seller for the years.

Among best-sellers of the last few months none is showing more gratifying "Back-List Vitality" [to use the jargon of the sales promotion conferences] than that robust tale of FRANK BUCK and EDWARD ANTHONY, *Bring 'Em Back Alive*.

Not since the days of *Trader Horn* and the *Cradle of the Deep*, has an adventure story from *The Inner Sanctum* received such reviews as *Bring 'Em Back Alive*. Among those who have hailed it are ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS, FLOYD GIBBONS, RAYMOND DITMARS, GEORGE EASTMAN, ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE, COURTNEY RILEY COOPER, ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT, HARRY HANSEN, LEWIS GANNETT, and scores of others, men of action as well as men of letters.

ESSANDESS.

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WE hand a prize for the worst book-jacket we have seen recently to Farrar & Rinehart for the one adorning "The Indiscreet Years," by *Larry Barretto*, which is probably a swell novel, as Barretto writes very well. But from the leering face of the lady who leans greasily at one on the dust-cover we could run ten miles without feeling tired. If that is Helena Fane, the heroine, a woman, the publishers tell us "sinning according to ordinary codes," please protect us from ever meeting her! And, by the way, what about that blurb phrase "sinning according to ordinary codes?" Does it mean that just because the poor girl couldn't think up some extraordinary codes to sin by she should be censured? Most of the sinners that we know are pretty humdrum, they follow the beaten track. They go on sinning along just the same as their fathers and grandfathers before them. So it isn't fair to charge this particular lady with lack of imagination when they all have it. We ourself have occasionally tried inventing a sin or two, but every time we did it it turned out that we were plagiarizing. Then we'd go away and sulk for days. . . .

We suppose what the blurb writer meant was that according to ordinary codes Helena was a sinner. Then why didn't he say so? Anyway we are sure that Helena is something better than "provocative" or "compelling" if Mr. Barretto wrote about her. We hate both those words. Why don't blurb writers say sometimes that a woman is provoking instead of provocative? They frequently are. Just too provoking! . . .

Also—we never can get through with the outside of this book—it is said on the back of the dust-cover that Mr. Barretto has "added a new note." That is in our anthology of awful expressions which we are carefully compiling. This is something that the publishing business as well as the advertising business has been needing for some time. One word the ladies just won't give up using, it seems from recent experiences of ours, is the word "intrigued." "I was awfully intrigued," they say, and we get awfully fatigued. How can you add a new note to "a solid record?" You can add a new drink to a liquid record, but that is dangerous, and anyway people won't allow us to speak of it. . . .

Also how can you "handle a social background" in a "tone?" But we must desist. Only, what is a "story-portrait?" It is unnecessary to say that none of these solecisms is Mr. Barretto's fault. He is a good writer, and we are glad to learn that he went to the Hoosac School, as we once went to a school that played them in baseball. We forget how many times we struck out. . . .

Gertrude Linnell, author of "The Black Ghost of the Highway," a novel concerning two American travelers in the Balkans, wrote her first novel at the age of thirteen when she was in love with a minister. It was about the conversion of a Cimbrian Princess to Christianity. This new story isn't a bit like it. Longmans, Green are publishing "The Black Ghost of the Highway," on February 18th. . . .

Which reminds us that we must apologize to Brewer & Warren for not mentioning the date of publication of *Sarah Salt's* "Strange Combat," which we mentioned last week. It is February 13th. . . .

It may be a little late, but we are printing the following Christmas acknowledgement to a friend from *Mr. Joseph Lewis French*. The picture mentioned in the verses is Rembrandt's "Man in Armor."

ON MR. BOWLES—HIS CHRISTMAS GIFT TO ME

Bowles sent me for my Christmas,—not a bill,
Although I've long time owed,—and owe him still.

Nor books, nor wine, nor neckties, nor cigars,
Though each of these may loose the spirits bars.

But done in sepia on a merge of red,
A little picture of a human head.

A warrior in a targe and plumed helm,
Whose front was like a shining diadem.

I've gazed upon the same till I behold
Some lost intaglio of the Age of Gold.

Look well upon this face and you will see
How War and Peace forever may agree.

The serious brow, stern lips and constant mien,
Yet gentlehood—grave purposed and serene.

"This is the Happy Warrior—this is he,
That every man in arms should wish to be." . . .

Colin Clements sends us from Beverly Hills, California, this little poem by *Florence Ryerson*, which we like very much.

SWEET MAN

I know the very sweetest man,
Who carries off our garbage can;
He's just as friendly as can be,
And loves to stop and talk with me;
My mother doesn't like his smell,
But then she doesn't know him well.

Uniform with the Nonesuch "Blake" and "Donne" Random House is now bringing out over here "The Selected Essays of *William Hazlitt*," edited by *Gooffrey Keynes*, and published by the Nonesuch Press in England. . . .

We saw a very nice picture of *Rebecca West* with her little dog in a recent *Publishers' Weekly* and started to read the caption under it as "Rebecca West's literary dog,"—only it was really, "Rebecca West's literary *log*," meaning "Ending in Earnest." The little dog looks to us rather like one of the elder statesmen. But then we knew a girl once who had a pekinese who looked very much like *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. . . .

H. A. Manhood's new novel, and his first, as his former volume was of short stories, is called "Gay Agony," and we feel sure it will be well worth your while. The Viking Press are the publishers. . . .

There have been a lot of authors speaking at the Barbizon. And we wish to say that the reason we haven't mentioned them as speaking at the Barbizon is that if we mentioned one of them as speaking at the Barbizon we should have to mention all of them as speaking at the Barbizon. So there! . . .

We are glad that *William Edwin Rudge* is publishing this month *Longfellow's* "The Leap of Roushan Beg" in exact facsimile reproduction of the manuscript, together with typographic transcription. There is an introduction by *Arthur Christy*, and the price of the book will be about five dollars. It is a good ballad. . . .

In March the same connoisseur of good books will bring out an old favorite of ours, "The Diamond Lens and Other Stories," by *Fitz-James O'Brien*, with an introduction by *Gilbert Seldes* and illustrated by *Ferdinand Huszti-Horvath*. . . .

Rockwell Kent is illustrating Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis" which Covici, Friede will bring out this Spring in a fifteen dollar limited edition and another one, specially bound, with an extra run of illustrations and signed by the artist, for seventy-five dollars. . . .

The Westgate Press of San Francisco announces the first publication in book form of a group of short stories, sketches, and parodies written by the late *Frank Norris* for *The Wave*, the famous San Francisco weekly, in the middle 'nineties. The book is of two hundred and fifty pages with a foreword by *Charles Gilman Norris*, Frank Norris's younger brother and the author of "Seed," etc. The format of the book has been designed by the Grabhorn Press. The price is ten dollars. The Westgate Press's address is 110 Sutter Street, San Francisco, California. They are also making first publication of the outspoken and witty correspondence between California's best-known poet, *George Sterling*, and the Coast's foremost satirist and critic, *Ambrose Bierce*. . . .

Random House announces as ready in April "The Time Machine" by *H. G. Wells*, with a new preface by Wells written especially for this edition, which is illustrated in color by *W. A. Dwiggins*. This story is said to be Wells's favorite, and is certainly one of ours. To judge by Dwiggins's illustrations to *Robert Louis Stevenson's* "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," he should do excellently also with Wells's famous story. . . .

Good night!

THE PHOENICIAN.

The AMEN CORNER

The Oxonian was conversing the other day with Atticus Buskin, the well-known playwright, and the lovely Egeria at one of those "teas" in which literary columnwriters are so much more interested than they are in books. (We will *not* use the dreadful word "columnist." It is not among the 75,000 words in the *Concise Oxford* Dictionary from which we are never separated.[1])

"The theatre," declared the lovely Egeria, who is Russian and very advanced, "we have outgrown the theatre."

"Yes, I am afraid we have," sighed Atticus, whose last two plays have not been received with the acclaim to which he is accustomed. The Oxonian objected. "If the theatre did not exist, it would have to be invented. What do people always talk about at lunch, tea, and dinner? Wherever two or three are gathered together the play's the thing."

Indeed, although the Oxonian tactfully refrained from saying so in the presence of Atticus, the play is so much the thing that a good play is never outgrown, even when it is several thousand years old. Witness the recent phenomenal run of the lively comedy for which the Greeks had a word, but which nobody in New York seems to know how to pronounce. (If you want to find out how to pronounce a word or settle an argument, you should own *Pronunciation: A Guide to American Standards*,[2] by Thorleif Larsen and F. C. Walker.) The Oxonian hopes some other producer will be emboldened to give us more of the great dramas of antiquity, like those found in *Ten Greek Plays*,[3] translated for the most part, by Professor Gilbert Murray. And they might revive some of the entertaining plays of our own language, like those in *Representative English Dramas from Dryden to Sheridan*, or the two volumes of *Eighteenth Century Comedies in the World's Classics*.[5]

We suspect that one of the reasons why these old plays are not revived oftener is the difficulty of finding modern actors whose diction is equal to them. On this point we could not do better than quote "that genius Kate Emil-Behnke," whose remarkable little book, *Speech and Movement on the Stage*, is, says the *Service Bulletin*, "fine collateral reading for the callow aspirant or the case-hardened professional."

"An essential factor, if not the chief one," she says, "in any scheme for the regeneration of the stage lies in *the training of the actor*. The more closely I am associated with the dramatic profession the more certain am I that all that is needed is radical and adequate training of voice and body."

She shows that by scientific voice and body training many drawbacks that have hitherto been thought insuperable can be overcome, and that astonishing gains, not only in technical efficiency but in personal appearance, can be effected. Mr. Rives Matthews, dramatic editor of *The Billboard*, wrote the Oxonian about this delightful and instructive book: "I enjoyed it thoroughly from cover to cover."

One anecdote which she tells of the acting of Edmund Kean appeals to us particularly: "When he played 'Sir Giles Overreach' ladies were carried out in screaming hysterics, Byron fell into a convulsive fit, and Mrs. Glover (1779-1850), herself an actress of repute, fainted." It reminds us of Macaulay's famous description of the trial of Warren Hastings.[6]

After the actor and the play comes the setting. We imagine most theatre libraries[7] already own Albert Rutherston's *Sixteen Designs for the Theatre*,[8] but those which do not should. The teacher of all the modern designers, as everyone knows, is Gordon Craig. His *Scene*,[9] a collection of designs and observations, has lately been supplemented by the wonderful volume giving an account of his production of Ibsen's *Pretenders* at Copenhagen and including magnificent reproductions of the drawings.[10] "The volume is as nearly perfect as design and print and paper can make it," says the *Theatre Arts Monthly*. Which reminds us that you should read *The World to Play With*,[11] by Ashley Dukes, their London editor, which discusses the theatre from both sides of the curtain.

Now let Egeria do her worst. Thalia, we predict, will survive.

THE OXONIAN.

The Book of the Week: SPEECH AND MOVEMENT ON THE STAGE, by KATE EMIL-BEHNKE, $3.00.

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